THE

LADIES'

MONTHLY MUSEUM.

SEPTEMBER, 1828.

THE FESTIVAL OF THE ROSE.

It was in the latter part of May that the Festival of the Rose was held in the little village of Alliére, in Provence. It had been the custom for years, many more than the memory of any inhabitant of the country could remember, to hold a sort of rustic revel under this name, where the fairest and most virtuous of the village maidens was adorned by her unenvying companions with that symbol of purity and loveliness—a white rose. It is not consistent with our present purpose to trace the origin of a ceremony which is as old, perhaps, as the barbarian inhabitants of the land, and which, at least, may be considered as one of the first indications of civilization. In the year 1234 the Count Raimond Alliére had resolved to celebrate it with more than usual pomp, for his niece, the daughter of a beloved brother who had died in the holy land, had just quitted the neighbouring convent in which she had been educated, and was about to become the mistress and the ornament of her doting uncle's castle. The day on which the Festival of the Rose was to be held was that of her nativity, and her uncle intended that she should offer herself as a competitor for the prize. Perhaps if she had been less unequivocally entitled to it her claim would have been allowed; but she had no need to call to her aid the advantages of her station. Her charms spoke for themselves, and her benevolence had been so often exercised upon the poor villagers, that they looked upon her as one of those beneficent beings of another world, which the imaginations of poets feign to come down to earth sometimes for the succour of its suffering children. Still, in the count's offering his niece as a candidate for the white rose, there was a proof of that simplicity which was a part of his character, and which was

so often, at the period of which we speak, to be found in company with the sterner virtues.

Perhaps, too, there was another motive which was not without its influence in the old man's mind. It had been the dying wish of his niece's father that she should marry the son of his companion in arms, Gui de Besancour; and when the beautiful Claude had attained that age at which it was thought time to fix her future destiny, this proposition was made to the young heir of Besancour. He bore his father's name of Gui, and had given fair earnest of keeping that name no less illustrious than it had been made by a long line of ancestors. He had gained honour beyond his years in the battles of his country, and perhaps some of the vanity of a young man led him to decline too hastily the proposal that had been made to marry him, in pursuance of a dead man's will, to a lady whom he had never seen. He replied to the count's messenger that he was about to take a command in Spain, and that, as his absence from his native country might be of uncertain duration, he relinquished all thoughts of the honour which was intended him by such an alliance. The count, stung with this cool reply, which however admitted of no further consideration, resolved that his niece's beauty should at least be seen and acknowledged, and therefore, at the approaching Festival of the Rose, he held a grand tourney, to which he invited the neighbouring barons and knights. He had little doubt that his niece would carry off the prize at the first, and he intended that she should display among her equals those charms to which he was sure all who saw her must pay homage.

The young Gui de Besancour was in no hurry to go to Spain; the news of the tourney determined him to go, but in disguise, to the Castle of Alliére, to see the lady whom fortune had intended to thrust upon him without his asking. Accompanied only by an esquire, who had, like himself, some skill in music, in the garb of troubadours—a disguise then commonly adopted by people of all ranks—he repaired to Alliére. He reached that place on the evening of the day on which the Festival of the Rose was held, and the tourney was to begin on the morrow.

The Count Gui was wholly unprepared for the nature of the scene to which he was thus unexpectedly introduced. He had heard of the Festival of the Rose, and knew indistinctly the nature of the ceremony, but he did not know the manners of the Provençal people, nor the extreme simplicity with which they

conducted this ceremony,—a simplicity which partook more of the olden times to which its origin belonged than to the then present period. The Count Raimond and his noble friends, male as well as female, were dressed in the garb of peasants. They mingled in the sports of their tenants without ceremony, the difference of rank was forgotten, and the father of his people was treated by them with that inward and heartfelt respect which a father deserves, but without any of that untoward homage which, in a more courtly company, his station would have entitled him to. The lovely Claude, dressed in pure white, with no other decoration than the charms which Heaven had bestowed her, and crowned with the one white rose which her undisputed beauty had won, moved among the village girls like one of them. The peasants were all in their best clothes, and in the frank hilarity of the moment no stranger could have told which of them was gentle and which simple.

On a throne of turf strewn with flowers, on which a bower of roses was erected, sate Claude, surrounded by her fair companions. A table was spread beneath a trellised vine, at the side where the Count Raimond and the elder part of the company sate. Some minstrels were at the opposite side, who were preparing to accompany the dance which was about to begin, when a shout from some of the peasants announced the arrival of strangers. The Count Gui, with his lute slung upon his shoulder, and followed by Raoul, his esquire, who had faithfully served him, in war as well as in peace, from his boyhood, approached. They were hurried up by a crowd of laughing rustics to the throne, to pay homage to the queen of the day. He was soon informed of the nature of the festival; but as it was a rule of the sport that the queen of the day should be addressed by no other name than that of her title, and giving in at once to the humour of the moment, he, after striking a few chords on his lute, improvised the following song, which he sang with a rich mellow voice:—

Of all the flowers that deck the earth,
When summer's beauties first unclose,
The fairest gem that takes its birth,
Is sweet Provence's matchless Rose.

And fair Provence has maidens bright,
Who, like her Rose, 'mong other flowers,
Shine but to form the world's delight,
And peerless deck her sunny bowers.

Here, where before my raptured gaze,
The union of these charms are seen,
Humbly I turn my willing lays
To thee, fair maid, the Rose's Queen.

Loud applauses followed this proof of the minstrel's skill, and having thus manifested his desire to join in the revelry, he needed no further introduction. The dance was about to begin, in which he joined, and with a courteous frankness claimed, in right of his being the last comer, the hand of the Queen of the Rose. If her beauty had struck him at the first glance, the charms of her conversation completed his fascination; and when the dance broke off, he was as completely and as unexpectedly in love as any man should desire to be. The Count Raimond, who saw by the demeanour of both the master and his follower that they were not minstrels by profession, endeavoured to ascertain who they were. Raoul, whom he essayed first, was too close and wary to give him any satisfactory replies, but cunning as the esquire was, the old count was too old a soldier to give him up at once; but seeing that Raoul had attached himself to the laughing Jacqueline, a god-daughter of his own, and the child of one of his tenants, he called her to him, and bade her try to get out the serving-man's secret. Jacqueline loved a secret herself; she loved mischief, too, a little—what woman does not? She liked to show her power over a new lover, and what pretty young woman will blame her for it? She managed matters so well that before the sports had concluded she had the whole of Raoul's history, which he imparted to her under the seal of secrecy; and with a similar qualification she, within two minutes after, had told the Count Raimond that the troubadour was no other than the young Gui de Besancour.

The Count Gui had in the mean time been busy in endeavouring to make himself agreeable to the young peasant, as he thought her, who had been crowned Queen of the Rose. He urged his suit with all the art that he possessed, and Claude soon perceived by his courtly gallantry that he was a person of some degree, and possessing accomplishments which were by no means common with such folks as his dress would have bespoken him. She replied to all his flatteries with a frank, but prudent, *naiveté*, which was well calculated to keep him in the error he had fallen into respecting her condition, and completely enchanted him. She asked him once more to sing, and he expressed his passion

in a roundel—a mode of composition which was then in great vogue in the French court.

Lady, lay those frowns aside ;
Winter reigns not all the year;
The laughing Spring, a flower-deck'd bride,
Has chased away the tyrant drear.
Then listen, lady, to my lay ;
Why in your heart should winter stay ?

Time's wing will crush the flow'ret's bloom,
And Love has wings as well as darts ;
The flowers must yield them to their doom,
And love rests only in young hearts :
Then listen, lady, to my lay ;
Whate'er has wings will fly away.

But time and love are both your own,
Your charms now blossom in their prime,
Enjoy them ere the hours be flown,
And leave to Fate the wintry time.
Then listen, lady, to my lay;
Gather the roses while you may.

The Count Raimond had taken advantage of his abstraction to request the elder of the peasants to take care that the stranger did not learn the rank of the queen and of the other noble guests, but that he should remain in the belief that they were merely inhabitants of a neighbouring farm. By this time the sun had set, and two horses caparisoned in the homely manner of the farmers being brought, Raimond summoned his niece to accompany him. Gui employed the few moments, during which the queen was preparing for her departure, to ask where she dwelt, but she would give him no other reply than by telling him she should be at the tourney at the castle on the following day. Raimond helped her on her horse, and mounting himself, and followed by his guests, the seeming rustics, they dashed off at a speed which made it impossible for the minstrels to overtake them, or to discover their route. The father of Jacqueline offered them the hospitality of his house, which they accepted, and Gui retired to rest to dream of the lovely Queen of the Rose, whom he determined to see on the following day.

The Castle of Alliére was crowded with all the gay and noble persons in the vicinity. In the court-yard lists were prepared, and on a dais at the upper end sate the Lady Claude. An in-

different spectator might have found it difficult to recognise in her the simple maiden of the preceding day. Instead of the white robe which had then displayed all the graces of her person, she was now dressed in all the gorgeous splendour which befitted her station. Jewels shone upon her fair bosom, a coronet blazed upon her brows, and a white veil, which reached nearly to her feet, concealed some part of her features. Gui was there, still in his dress of a troubadour, and looked around in vain for the Queen of the Rose. He saw all the maidens whom he had noted as being her companions, but she was not among them, and he never thought of discovering her in the lovely heiress of Alliéres. Wearied with his search, and disappointed at its result, he betook himself to the lists to see the tourney. At first he felt no desire to join it, but when he saw that the prize was to be bestowed by the hand of the lady whose love had been proffered to him, and whom he had rejected, he felt some desire to see her if he could do so unknown. The clang of the trumpets, and clash of arms roused his martial ardour, and he was blaming himself for not having provided himself with horse and armour, when he was joined by an old peasant whom he had talked with on the preceding evening. He perceived immediately that it was the *chaperon* of the maiden whom he had been in vain seeking. He asked him where the Queen of the Rose was. The old man, who was no other than the Count Raimond, replied that she would be there anon. "But why," said he, "Sir Minstrel,do you stand here an idle gazer while so manly a sport as this is on foot. Any one can see that though you now carry a lute you have been used to a more stirring occupation."

Sir Gui turned upon his inquirer, whose familiarity was anything but offensive. "You see," he replied, "that I have neither horsenor arms."

"If that be all," said the old man, "your need will be soon supplied, for yonder stands the steed of Sir Albert Brunne, who has received a hurt in the last tilt. He loves the sport so well that, though he cannot join in it himself, he will gladly see another do so. If you will ask, I am sure he will lend you both steed and harness.

Gui knew the knight whose name had been mentioned, and beckoning to Raoul, he bade him ask the loan of the armour in his name, at the same time enjoining the knight not to disclose the circumstance of his being present. A prompt reply was

returned, and in a few minutes' space the Count Gui was in the saddle, armed for the tilt, and with a good lance in his hand.

The trumpets sounded, and he rode gallantly into the lists. Up to this moment fortune had favoured the Baron de Riverdun, who was understood to be a suitor for the hand of the Lady Claude. He was a man of large stature, and had distinguished himself in the wars of Guienne. His well-known prowess deterred many of the competitors from encountering him, and his strength and skill had worsted all who offered to dispute the prize. Gui, however, was destined to check his triumph. They ran three courses, in the two first of which their address was such as to avoid being borne from the saddles, although the shocks were rude enough. In the third Gui levelled the coronal of his lance against the throat of his antagonist, and the blow was so true and so vigorous as to bear the baron a spear's length from his saddle, and left him upon the field. His squires bore him off the ground. A crowd of assailants offered themselves to encounter the new comer, who received their attacks in succession, but still triumphed over them all. At length there were no more opponents, and the unknown knight was declared to have won the prize. He approached the dais at which the Lady Claude was seated, and kneeling, received from her hands a green scarf worked with white roses which was the prize. Her veil was still over a part of her face, but her graceful manner, and the beauty of such part of her countenance as he could see, convince himd that he had been somewhat hasty in his refusal. The herald approached him to know his name. His esquire replied, that his master had at present no other appellation than that of the Knight of the White Rose. The trumpets then brayed out, and the heralds proclaimed the Knight of the White Rose to be the victor of the day's tourney.

The Count Raimond in his proper person greeted him on his success, and, without appearing to penetrate his disguise, craved his presence at the banquet, to which Sir Gui acceded. The feast was graced by all the beauty and worth of Provence. The Lady Claude sate at the upper end of the feast, and the victor was placed near her. He had now a full view of her face, and, although he could not help thinking that she bore an extraordinary resemblance to the Queen of the Rose, yet the change of dress, and the circumstances in which she was now placed, forbade his imagining that she was the lowly maid who had enraptured

him on the preceding evening. He talked to her and found the graceful polish of her manners and the charms of her mind in no degree inferior to her beauty. He was half ready to chide himself for the dangerous facility with which he found himself again enslaved when the feast broke up. Some of the guests repaired to the gardens of the castle; others remained in the hall, diverting themselves in conversation, or in some social sports.

The Lady Claude, followed by Sir Gui, proceeded to a terrace which commanded a view of the surrounding country. The evening was drawing to a close, and the declining rays of the sun shed a purple kind of tint over the picturesque and fertile landscape which lay before them. At the upper end of the terrace was an alcove decorated with rare plants, and constructed in that spirit of gorgeous ornament which is the characteristic of what is called the florid Gothic. An open door led to the boudoir of the Lady Claude. In the alcove were seats and tables. An illuminated volume of Provençal poems lay there, and a lute, which seemed to belong to the fair mistress of the castle, was on a seat just by. The enamoured Sir Gui asked the lady if she had skill upon the instrument.

"I am a passing poor performer," said she; "but, if it will amuse you, I will sing a lay which has lately been brought into this country by a wandering minstrel." After a short prelude, she began to sing the roundel which Sir Gui had sung on the preceding evening.

Lady, lay those frowns aside;
Winter reigns not all the year;
The laughing Spring, a flower-deck'd bride,
Has chased away the tyrant drear.
Then listen, lady, to my lay;
Why in your heart should winter stay?

Sir Gui listened in dumb astonishment. He knew the air to be his own, and he knew that he had composed the words on the instant at which he sang them.

"Can it be," said he, "that you have heard this roundel sung by a minstrel."

"Nothing is more true," replied the Lady Claude; "and it was no longer too than yester-eve."

"Were you then at the Festival of the Rose in the village below?" asked he with increasing anxiety.

"That she was I'll be sworn," said the Count Raimond, who

had been an unobserved witness of this conversation; "and by the same token she was herself the Queen of the Rose as truly as you are the Count Gui de Besancour."

Gui turned round; a few words sufficed to explain to him the cause of his delusion, and a short, but sincere apology ensured his pardon. It need not be added that he gave up all thoughts of the Spanish expedition. A few weeks saw him the happy husband of the Rose Queen; and, although at the present time the Festival of the Rose is annually celebrated at Alliére, never has there been a fairer candidate for the prize than the lovely Claude.

AN IRISH PATTERN.

After a walk of about seven Irish miles from the village of Inchegeela, we gained the brow of a mountain, and beheld the Lake of Gougaun with its little wooded island beneath us; one spot on its shore, swarming with people, appeared, from our elevated situation, to be a dark mass surrounded by moving specks, which continually merged into it. On our descent we caught the distant and indistinct murmur of the multitude; and as we approached and forded the eastern extremity of the lake, where its waters discharge themselves through a narrow and precipitous channel, an unseemly uproar burst upon us, though at a distance of nearly half a mile from the assembly. It was not without difficulty that we forced our way through the crowd on the shore of the lake, to the wall of the chapels on the island, where we stood amid an immense concourse of people: the interior of the cells were filled with men and women in various acts of devotion, almost all of them on their knees; some, with hands uplifted, prayed in loud voices, using considerable gesticulation, and others, in a less noisy manner, rapidly counted the beads of their rosary, or, as it is called by the Irish peasant, their pathereen, with much apparent fervour; or, as a substitute for beads, threw from one hand into the other, small pebbles to mark the number of prayers they had repeated; whilst such of the men as were not furnished with other means kept their reckoning by cutting a notch on their cudgel, or on a piece of stick provided for the purpose. On gaining the back of the well we observed a man, apparently of the mendicant order, describing, on a particular stone in its wall, the figure of a cross, with small pieces of slate, which he afterwards sold to such devotees as were desirous of possessing these relics.—*Croker's Researches.*

MAD WILLY.

In visiting a celebrated ruin in Berkshire, my road lay through a retired country church-yard. I seldom pass unnoticed these last resting-places of lowliness, "where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap:" but the singularly interesting appearance of this determined me to give it a more than customary attention. Hastening, therefore, my return from the primary object of my journey, I arrived at the church-yard before sun-set. I had spent some time in this mansion of the dead, when, on turning an angle of the church, I discovered a youth rising from a grave at which he had been kneeling. The singularity of his appearance and demeanour induced me to approach him; he seemed about the age of twelve years, and the wild expression of his eyes indicated the aberration of that intellect which seemed stamped upon his singularly interesting countenance. As he did not appear to be labouring under any painful feelings I had no hesitation in addressing him: the only reply he gave me was, "Pity poor Mad Willy! I have been to my father and mother—they were asleep under that pretty grave—but they awoke, and told me I should soon sleep with them: pity poor Mad Willy!"

On my return to the village, I ascertained the particulars of the story of this poor maniac, which was in effect as follows:—William Heartly was as honest and industrious a young man as any in the village. His exemplary conduct had obtained him the good will of his neighbours; and constant employ as gardener at the parsonage enabled him to support a degree of credit superior to that of the common labourer. To this distinction he was entitled, as his father had been a small landholder, and his connexions were in other respects reputable.

At an early age, William engaged the affections and received the hand of Jane Wortly, the pretty niece of the squire's housekeeper, with the addition of whose little property, and the savings of his own honest industry, he was enabled to engage in business on his own account. Thus far had William Heartly's lot in life been happy; but, soon after the birth of his first and only child, (the ill-fated subject of this story,) Robert Brown, his schoolfellow and particular favourite, returned from sea, and at William's desire became an inmate of his cottage. This man, whose services and wounds had gained him a pension sufficient for his support, had in early youth been addicted to poaching;

and now, in defiance of William's remonstrances, began to renew his former practices. William, who considered this habit, if not absolutely criminal, yet as a prelude to more immoral pursuits, for a long period resisted his secret inclinations to join his friend in his poaching excursions. One evening, however, he yielded to his solicitations, and accompanied him in his illegal pursuit. One breach of duty naturally entails another; he had now, as he termed it, broken the ice, and was easily prevailed upon to a second and a third excursion; till, at length, what he had at first enjoyed as an unusual gratification, became, by indulgence, a confirmed habit. A poacher is almost invariably a drunkard. William Heartley was now seldom at home; and, when with his family, his self-dissatisfaction too frequently vented itself in harsh and unkind treatment of his innocent wife and child. Sometimes, however, he would awake to a sense of his criminality, and seriously promise amendment: but these promises were, unfortunately, soon forgotten. One night the two poachers were attacked by a party of gamekeepers, one of whom was seriously injured in the affray. William and his companion escaped, but were compelled to fly the country. Thus were the advantages of a life of exemplary credit forfeited by a blind indulgence of a dishonourable inclination.

From the time of William Heartly's leaving home, the health of his wife began rapidly to decline. Her cottage no longer exhibited that appearance of decent neatness and order which had hitherto distinguished it. Her child was neglected, and became dependent upon the charity of the neighbours for support. At length the recovery of the person injured in the poaching affray induced the more wealthy inhabitants to intercede in behalf of William Heartly. With considerable difficulty his place of secrecy was discovered, and he returned, as he hoped, to the bosom of his family.

It was "a bright and balmy afternoon" when the unfortunate man entered, after an absence of two years, his native village. As he passed the church-yard, the knell struck out with a peal which, to the boding ears of William, sounded like despair. Unconscious of what he did, he threw himself upon a tomb, and awaited the arrival of "the funeral's lingering array." It moved with a stillness and slowness that thrilled the soul of the wanderer with dreadful impatience. But at length it did approach. The pastor of the parish, William's old master, preceded the mournful group. The clerk, the sexton, the bearers, the *mourners*, all—all

were his friends, the companions of his youth. He wrung his brow, streaming with drops of anguish; till the vicar pronounced the words "dear sister here departed." "Sister!" exclaimed the wretched man, as he sprang forward to the brink of the grave, "Sister! she was more to me than sister!" He looked upon the coffin's lid; the words on it were "Jane Heartly, aged 27." He turned from the dreadful reality with a groan of horror, and glancing his eye wildly around, discovered his boy led by the hand of a by-stander. He snatched him to his bosom, and sprang with him into the grave. "Come, Willy!" he exclaimed, "let them bury us together; they have torn your mother from us." Nature could no more; he fell a corpse upon the coffin of his wife. The child could not be released without violence from his dying grasp; and, when torn from its horrible situation, was discovered to be a confirmed idiot!

The unfortunate pair lie buried in the same grave. The boy has since been maintained by the parish, and daily visits the grave of his parents in the manner in which I first discovered him.

CHARLES M——.

Wawcott House, August 14th, 1828.

MARRIAGE BY PROXY IN THE EARLY AGES.

IN marriage by proxy, it was formerly the custom for the proxy to introduce his right leg up to the knee into the bed of the princess whom he married. Louis de Bavaire, who married the Princess Marie de Bourgogne, daughter of Charles, Duke of Bourgogne, in the name of Archduke Maximilian of Austria, performed this ceremony. The object of the ceremony was to render the marriage more certain, it being supposed that the princess who had submitted to this kind of approach on the part of man, could not depart from her engagement and take another husband.

If the early historians may be believed, the first marriage by proxy was that of Clovis of France with Clotilda; Aurele having, it is said, married Clotilda at the court of Bourgogne, in the name of Clovis, his master, by giving her a ring and other pledges of a legitimate marriage. The ancient practice of placing the proxy's leg in the bed of the bride is long since discontinued.

A king's proxy is usually a prince of his blood; if he be not, he is not allowed to take the hand of the princess, but only to place his by the side of her's.

THE AWFUL BELL.

It is somewhat singular that none of our popular writers have availed themselves of the materials which are so profusely scattered over Bedfordshire. No county of England is more rich in traditionary lore, whilst it abounds in ruined edifices, whose appearance, even to this day, declares them to have been princely, baronial, and religious.—As it was one of the most extensive of the Roman stations, many of the Norman nobles, who accompanied William the Conqueror to England, erected castles there; and at Helenstow, now abridged into Elstow, was a beautiful priory, for nuns of the order of St. Bennett, raised by Judith, the wife of Earl Waltheof, of Huntingdon, on her preservation from shipwreck, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, who built the principal part of London Wall.

Near to Aspley-Guise, which is not far from Wooburn, stood Earl Mercar's castle, now a heap of ruins, with the exception of one beautiful arch, which still remains as a proud memento of the former magnificence of the whole fabric. Of this nobleman, his brother Edwin, and Lady Matilda Rynolph, the following traditional tale is still current in various parts of the county.

When William the Conqueror had been settled some years in England he became involved in several serious disputes with his subjects, Normans as well as natives, owing, most probably, to his tyrannical as well as rapacious disposition. These bitter trials, increasing with his years, and his temper soured by the undutiful conduct and fierce contentions of his children, occasioned an open revolt throughout the country. Earl Mercar, a nobleman of Rouen, and formerly a great favourite with the monarch, was among the first to fly from his allegiance, and, aided by numerous and well disciplined followers, joined the opposing army. To them, indeed, he proved a great acquisition, from his known bravery, wealth, power, and, above all, his perfect skill in arms. He was, therefore, eagerly invited to take the command, an honour which much delighted the fiery warrior, who breathed nothing but revenge for the affronts he had received, and the mortifications he endured, by perceiving how much the influence of Rynolph, the now confidential friend of the king, was daily gaining over that monarch.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that the Baron Rynolph

was a subject well worthy, not only of the condescending friendship of William, but of the many favours he received from him. He was endowed with prudence and wisdom; and as he nearly doubled the age of Mercar, was more on a level with that of the king; besides he had acquired an experience, in almost every concern of life, to which his rival was an utter stranger: but Mercar's self-love, vain-glory, and violent ambition, entirely blinded him to reason.

Rynolph was a widower with but one daughter; his son, a brave youth, had fallen in battle; but of the surviving child he was justly proud and exceedingly fond. Time, and the consciousness that his son Robert had died a death of glory, tended, in some measure, to alleviate his grief for the departed heir, who was interred with his mother at Canterbury.

Matilda possessed all the accomplishments known to that remote age. Great personal beauty, joined to a sweetness of temper, and a firmness of mind, rendered her the admiration of her sex. In fine, she was a being of the most amiable and exemplary disposition, and her sentiments towards William, loyal in the extreme. If she entertained any prejudices, they were blended in an attachment, dear as existence itself, to the Normans; for, though born in England, she still considered herself as one of that people; and her mother's death, which happened during her childhood, caused her to be sent to a convent at Caen, there to be educated under the care and inspection of her aunt, the baron's elder sister, which circumstance, with others equally attractive in infancy, might reasonably have inspired her with a strong predilection in this respect.

The English nation was now in a most direful state of civil warfare; and such were the divisions that rent its unhappy people, that kindred were opposed to kindred, and the dearest friends converted into the bitterest foes.

Earl Mercar was very successful at the head of his forces, and, in various severe encounters, defeated those of the king. He also made divers noble persons, captives, who were conveyed to his camp near London, (supposed at Islington,) and hundreds more shed their blood on the fatal field.

Among the prisoners who graced his conquests, were the Baron Rynolph and the lovely Lady Matilda. These were not taken in battle, but intercepted on their way from Berkshire to the king's camp, which also lay near London, on the western side. Proceeding at the head of their vassals, they were met by a forag-

ing party of Earl Mercar, and their small but valiant band, after a very sharp contest, was obliged to yield to superior numbers, while Sigisbert, the foster-brother of Matilda, was one of the first who perished in defending her.

What a triumph for the proud Mercar—he ordered the baron to be strictly guarded in a tent appointed for his reception, adding, that if they allowed him to effect an escape, those soldiers, whose duty it was to guard against it, should be led to instant execution. Matilda and her attendant Bertha were ordered to another tent, for the present, till he should have considered how to dispose of them, whom he deemed as incumbrances, which he could well dispense with; but as the maiden was of noble rank, and the daughter of the king's favourite, policy suggested to him that kind treatment was best, as he might obtain a large ransom for her, or make a treaty of exchange to his advantage.

Mercar had never seen the Lady Matilda, or he would not have argued the matter so coolly and soldier-like, as will be shown by the following scenes.

Lady Matilda, having recovered from her fright and fatigue, demanded an audience of Earl Mercar, which was granted: she entered his tent, supported by the weeping Bertha, whose blue eyes had never been free from tears since the untimely fall of her lover Sigisbert: they had long esteemed each other, and would have been married some weeks afterwards, but for the breaking out of these disastrous commotions. Thus was *her* happiness blighted in its bloom, to the great regret of the baron and his daughter, who highly valued these young persons.

Matilda, on entering the tent where Mercar was seated, with as much pomp as his camp could possibly admit, for he was fond of an ostentatious display, threw up the veil with which she had covered herself, as a shield from the rude gaze of the soldiery, and most unintentionally astonished him by her beauty, for the lovely and innocent girl was unconscious of her own power.

The earl, in faltering accents, requested to know the purpose that had led her to honour him with a visit. "To ask the liberty of my revered father, the Baron Rynolph; I am aware," she said, with a modest dignity of tone, "it is a vain request; you are his foe in more respects than one; yet what grieves me worse is to think that *you*, also, are a Norman; but I will not offend your ear by such remarks, I leave the care of my dear father to Heaven and the king; for myself, only, I plead; a camp is not

fitting for my sex." "True," replied Mercar, gazing on her with admiration, "whither do your wishes lead?"

"It was the intention of my father," continued Lady Matilda, "to place me, until peace, with her grateful olives, should again visit our island, in the convent of Bridgetines in Westminster, where a cousin of mine has recently taken the veil, as he was fearful, in such times as these, to leave me unprotected at Cumner Castle."

"I wonder not," said the earl, with a warmth of expression that suffused her cheeks, "that the baron should guard such a treasure with a miser's care."

He then escorted Matilda to her tent, and left her at its entrance, assuring her that he would make the most speedy preparations to remove her from the camp. She noticed the ambiguity of the expression, but supposing he intended to send her to Westminster, in compliance with her father's intention, she gracefully thanked him, and he quitted her deeply enamoured.

Mercar was single, and though he had often told a 'tale of love' to a fair lady, his heart had never been feelingly interested; but he was now doomed to know 'the tender passion' in its fullest extent; and that too, for the daughter of Rynolph, the envy and hatred of whom led him to join the disaffected nobles in their revolt against their sovereign. Bertha had noticed his gaze on her beloved mistress, with a suspicion that evinced her penetration; she was conscious he was smitten, and nothing appeared, at this time, to the mourning maiden, so likely to lead to fatal consequences;—for Lord Edwin, the earl's younger brother, was the approved lover of Matilda, and held a high command in the king's army. Bertha mentioned her fears to her dear lady; but the fair one seemed to treat the subject lightly, and trusted she would soon be far from Mercar and the camp.

On the fourth day from her interview with the earl, a travelling litter arrived at the entrance of the tent, and she was requested to prepare for her immediate departure with Bertha. Lady Matilda entreated to see her father, previously to her quitting the camp, but this was refused; she said she "would speak to Earl Mercar," but was informed "he was absent for a few days."—They were obliged to obey his orders, and to admit her to the baron would be acting against his command. This was a woeful addition to her grief, for she was the most affectionate of daughters to one of the most tender parents that ever adorned existence.

The officer, who had the command of the guard, appointed to attend the Lady Matilda, appeared to regard her with respectful sympathy, and implored her to stay her tears; that Baron Rynolph was in perfect safety; and though freedom was denied him, he wanted nothing else; and he hoped, from the present cessation of hostilities, that a treaty would be entered into on such conditions as would insure a peace.

The way seemed long and tedious to Matilda and Bertha—it was night fall when the party stopped—as Rodolpho (the officer) handed her from the litter, she was struck with the desolate appearance of the place, and the meanness of the dwelling into which they were conducting her.

"Surely," said she, "this can never be the Bridgetine Convent." The officer replied, that "they were in a very different road." "For pity's sake," said the lovely maid, "tell me instantly whose house this is?" after uttering which, a convulsive tremor almost choked her speech.

"It is a small farm belonging to very honest people, well known to Earl Mercar, and in the direct road to his castle at Aspley-Guise, where," he continued, "they were to arrive the following night." What a contrast between the slow progress of the ancients and the rapid flight of modern travellers.

Lady Matilda heard no more—her feelings already harassed, by being hurried from the camp, without seeing the baron, gave way; and she was borne insensible to the chamber prepared for her, where she was carefully attended to by the poor farmer's wife and her pretty daughter Rose. The good people sincerely felt for the lovely fair one, when they discovered that she was journeying against her will; but, in those days, of vassalage, the poor could only express their pity, or offer the little alleviations that were in their power.

Lady Matilda, however, soon recovered her wonted firmness of mind. She considered that she could be no more in the earl's power in his castle, did he contemplate her dishonour, than she should have been by remaining in the camp, and, of the two, it might be the least evil. At all events, she resolved not to anticipate a fresh calamity, having, at present, enough of sorrow to combat with. After offering up her prayers to the Divine Majesty, and supplicating his comfort and care, she partook of the refreshments then laid before her, and sought repose, as the curfew-bell had tolled some time since.

During the night Matilda had a most singular dream, which she narrated to Bertha while taking the morning manchet. "I thought," said the peerless maiden, "that I was in a forest, and, of a sudden, met my noble-minded Edward; he approached and took my hand, when instantly a fierce tiger sprung between us and seized him."

"Oh! dream of fatal import," interrupted Bertha, "perhaps the brave youth is no more."

"I hope far better tidings," replied Lady Matilda; "for at the dread instant, a noble lion rushed from amongst the thickly embowering trees, and triumphed over the tiger, while we escaped in safety."

Before Bertha could make any comment, Rodolpho appeared to announce the litter; and Lady Matilda, having taken a kind leave of her humble hosts, proceeded on her involuntary route to Aspley-Guise, where they arrived after a cold and dreary journey, the weather proving very tempestuous, and the minds of the fair travellers participating in the gloom that surrounded them.

Aspley appeared a most extensive mansion, to which Matilda was welcomed by several female servants, headed by a decent-looking matron, who conducted her to a suite of apartments prepared for her ladyship, where the cheerful blaze of wood-fires, and the fragrancy they emitted, seemed to check, rather than create, horror.

Our heroine inquired if the earl was at the castle, and to her great comfort was informed in the negative. "He departed from hence yesterday, after a short sojourn of a few hours," replied the dame, whose name was Beatrice, "having come merely to make preparations, as he told me, for a noble captive lady, who would be much better attended here, in regard to the delicacy due to her rank and sex, than what the rudeness of a camp could possibly admit of."

When they were left alone, Bertha said to her beloved mistress, "Surely, my dear lady, it will not be impossible for us to escape from hence."

"But to where, or to whom can we fly? my dear girl," replied Matilda; "consider what a distance we are from home,—that my dear father is the prisoner of Mercar, and were I to flee, the fiery earl might wreak his vengeance on that being whom I so truly love and reverence; besides you may rest fully assured that this castle is surrounded by such persons, only, as are in the confidence and interest of its lord."

These truths turned to despair the transient hope that played in the guileless bosom of poor Bertha, who, flooded with tears, said, she indulged the expectation of both being enabled to reach some station where the king's forces lay, to implore their generous succour and consideration.

"Nothing," observed Lady Matilda, "but an attempt at outrage, would make me resort to flight. We should run the greatest hazards before we might meet protection from the king's party; and, if retaken, it would afford Mercar a pretext for dishonourable usage—indeed, in flying from one evil we might incur a much greater danger."

Bertha, however, seemed reluctant to be convinced; but, the next morning, it was sufficiently obvious that had Lady Matilda resolved to become a fugitive, she would have been frustrated, for Rodolpho remained with his band of soldiers, as a guard, at the castle.

A month elapsed without any change, except the tidings that the king and the refractory nobles, not being able to compromise their differences, had been engaged in another battle in which William was again worsted, and Baron Rynolph still remained a prisoner; though a large ransom had been offered for him it was refused by Mercar.

The earl now visited the castle, and respectfully requested an audience of Lady Matilda. This deference pleased her, and seemed a tacit security of her safety, as he condescended to sue for what he could have commanded; the favour was accordingly granted.

After the first salutations of meeting, and having satisfactorily answered her inquiries, as to the health of her father, he touched on the subject that now occupied his heart—his ardent love for her.

Matilda frankly answered, that her heart was in the keeping of another; yet were it not, she would never bestow it on one who was in arms against her king—"Had you been a Saxon noble who experienced the grievances that caused the revolt, I should have thought the treason less; but, for a Norman to act thus—Oh! I blush, Earl Mercar, believe me, at your criminal apostacy."

The spirit with which she spoke this, only added strength to his former admiration of her, and he said, "is my taking up arms against him, the only failing in Lady Matilda's eye?"

"No," she replied, "my father is held by you in bondage."

"It is, then, in your power to free him. The instant your hand is mine, he shall be restored to his own castle; and this I swear by your lovely self and all that I hold sacred."

"I thought Earl Mercar had a noble spirit—also that he could more justly appreciate the workings of the human heart."

He paused—and then required an explanation of her meaning.

"Would Earl Mercar take to his arms, a bride on such terms as these?—a sacrifice—a forced assent to secure a parent's release!—Would not my parent despise a freedom, purchased by a daughter, of a foe?—Give him liberty,—unconditional liberty—then give me to his protection, and you will better become the character of a wooer."

Mercar was perplexed and abashed; he retired rather abruptly from the chamber to reflect on what the Lady Matilda had said. To release the baron was a point of too much importance for him to yield, as, by so doing, he would lose a considerable advantage over the king, who deeply regretted the situation of his favourite; and he must also resign his fair prisoner whom he then could have no pretence to keep from the arms of her father. These reflexions tormented him; for, though a slave to his inflammatory passions, he was not lost to the laws of honour; and could he have retreated with fame, he would have retraced the steps he had taken against William.

Several interviews took place between Earl Mercar and Lady Matilda without advantage to either side; and though she repeatedly assured him of a prior attachment, he gave no credence to the fact, but attributed her refusals of his hand to the continued imprisonment of the baron and his keeping in arms against the king.

He sometimes rather vehemently pleaded his own cause; at others, reproached her with cruelty—yet, it must be confessed that he continued to act towards her with delicacy and honour, and his respect and forbearance were as great as if she had been under her parental roof, and himself a visitor.

At length, affairs connected with the army obliged Mercar to return to the camp, sooner than he had at first expected. He took leave of Matilda on his knees, imploring her to let love plead for him in his absence, and vowing that the baron's life and safety should be as dear to him as his own—"dearer," he added, "for if not blessed with *thee*, what is existence worth to Mercar?"

Matilda made no reply—she was fearful of irritating him by

any reproaches, on account of her father; and, at parting, forced herself to take as courteous a leave of him as possible, without having recourse to downright duplicity.

The absence of Earl Mercar was a great relief to the noble maiden; she saw his love was sincere, and she pitied him; she likewise was certain that he indulged hopes that never could be realized; and she had reason to dread the discovery of his brother being a favoured rival. She was also ignorant of Lord Edwin's fate, and Bertha, in a conversation, purposely entered into with Rodolpho on the family connexions of Mercar, without betraying her knowledge of that young nobleman, could never gain the so ardently-desired information, of which he was as ignorant as herself, until one fatal day a rumour reached Aspley that he had fallen in a recent skirmish, as he was repairing with some important despatches from General Montreville le Barr to the king at Winchester.

With streaming eyes Bertha unfolded the sad tidings to her mistress, who, on receiving them, clasped her snowy-white hands and sank on a seat, where she remained the very statue of despairing grief fully personified. At length, by the most tender assiduities, her alarmed maid induced her to discard her grief; yet still the alternate exclamation was heard, "Oh! Edwin, lost Edwin, by this unnatural and unjust warfare, art thou for ever torn from me! no more to meet in this world! would we had never met!"

Bertha then said, "dearest lady you lost a mother, do you forget that sadly interesting fact?"

Matilda, absorbed in grief, replied, "I thought not of it, but, my faithful Bertha, it is never long absent from my mind, and memory will retrace that sudden wreck as long as I have existence—Yes, at this moment, I think I see the gallant Edwin plunging in the waves and rescuing my dear parent from their overwhelming fury.—But though he returned with us, in the same ship, from Normandy, I never particularly noticed him till he became our guest—I cannot dwell on this theme—Oh! Bertha, why were you such an ill-omened messenger?"

"I thought it adviseable, dear lady, that you should know the worst."

"You acted rightly; bear with me; I scarcely know what I said—Yes, I now know the worst, and it behoves me to bow resignedly to the will of Heaven."

In a few days, when the Lady Matilda seemed more composed, Bertha ventured to hint that, possibly, she might now look on Earl Mercar with a more favourable eye; but her mistress received the suggestion with an indignant look, and made a remark that mounted the blood to the damsel's cheeks. Bertha had lately lost her tender remembrances of Sigisbert, and listened to the entreaties of Rodolpho to favour him with her society whenever she had leisure; from her window in the lofty turret, Lady Matilda often observed they were fond of rural walks, yet she did not severely blame her faithful maid for this lapse of posthumous faith; the girl was simple, innocent, and virtuous—Rodolpho was of rare manners, fascinating, and greatly her superior, but open and honourable in his conduct; he was aware she had been beloved by another, but he consoled himself by reflecting that her lover was—" no more."

The pomp and bustle of war did not erase from Earl Mercar's mind the charms and prepossessing manners of the baron's daughter. He applied to Rynolph for his interference, offering the worthy nobleman, liberty, his friendship, and a number of other concessions, if he would favour him in this respect. But he was not to be thus won over; and without mentioning any favour or former engagement, lest he should do mischief to the parties, he declined any treaty with a refractory subject of his beloved monarch. What can love not do? The earl offered to lay down his arms, and enter into fresh oaths of allegiance to William if but blessed with the fair enslaver of his soul. The baron, thus pressed, and unwilling to declare the truth, referred him to Lady Matilda, who, he said, was left, by him, to the dictates of her own heart; adding, however, that it was time enough to urge his suit when he had returned to the duty he owed to his king and country and beheld peace restored. " We cannot," he concluded, " expect the Saxons to look on us with respect when we cannot respect ourselves, and when our dissensions display so vile an example."

" The remark, though severe," thought the earl, " is just indeed. I am unworthy the name of Norman. Why have I listened to discontented rebels and the suggestions of envy at another being more favoured? a favour certainly well-deserved. I now feel I have lessened my influence by contumacy and ill-placed pride; but the fair Matilda shall be the guiding star to lead me back to happiness. Hold, my heart,—has she not often said that she

loved another, and was in turn beloved? No, it cannot be, for she, so noble in mind and mien, person and manner, could never countenance one who was not equal to herself; besides, possessed he the feelings of man, or aware of her captivity, he would have endeavoured to rescue her by force of arms or perish in the attempt. No Norman would have sustained her loss, and, yet, if she have a lover he is one of *us*. But what say I? He could not be thus tame—a mere invention to elude my suit." In this manner the earl soliloquized till at last he imagined that Matilda would bestow her hand if her father were liberated, and himself once more on good terms with William; a measure in which he considered he might succeed, as the king was weary of an unequal contest which almost daily drove some powerful baron from him. The idea was also encouraged by the assurance that William's presence was much wanted in Normandy, whither it was impossible for him to repair while England groaned under an accumulated weight of misery and strife.

How to proceed with caution or security was the chief consideration with Mercar. To do all this, without being able to secure Matilda, was running a great hazard; nor would she, in all probability, trust to the mere avowal of his intentions to enter into a treaty with William, and the baron refused to be aught but a passive instrument in the affair.

During these reflections he was interrupted by the sound of trumpet—a signal was given that some one was entering his tent. Siward, his confidential friend and attendant, who had become grey in the service of the family, entered to announce the approach of a prisoner of distinction—a visible concern appeared on his brow, and greatly depressed a countenance which nature had formed with strongest powers of expression.

Mercar demanded, "what could cause this emotion for a captive?" but Siward turned away without reply, hastily dashing off an unbidden tear that then intruded. "'Tis strange," exclaimed the earl, "surely it is not the king—a short time since I should have proudly exulted in such a triumphant event; not so now, as it would ruin me for ever in the opinion of Matilda and her father." The curtains of the tent were drawn aside by the sentinels, and then entered, not William, but Lord Edwin, the earl's younger brother, who was not slain, as reported at Aspley-castle, but only taken prisoner on his progress, and having been allowed to remain a few days in Hampshire to recover of a wound he had

received in his side from the thrust of a broken spear, Mercar's soldiers brought him by slow journeys to head quarters, but knew not who he was till recognised by the brave, honest, though misled Siward.

The brothers stood gazing at each other for some moments not knowing what to say, or how to act, at a meeting so painfully interesting. Nature, however, asserted her claims,—she would not be subdued—they rushed into each others arms, and, when faithful Siward entered, he had the satisfaction of beholding them conversing most amicably.

Mercar rejoiced Edwin's heart by informing him of his intention to submit to a treaty with the king, which, he trusted, would lead to peace and reconciliation, as well as secure both to Normans and Saxons an equitable share of the desired privileges. He then added the history of the fair captive at Aspley-castle and her father, but for some reasons of his own, unconnected with this tale, concealed their names, not that he in the least suspected Edwin's knowledge of the lovely Matilda. Certain it was, the noble youth had not heard of the seizure of Rynolph and his beloved Matilda; he was assured they were both safe at Cumner, for when he last saw them, the baron had declared his intention of remaining neuter, yet, when he perceived affairs preponderate against the king, he altered his resolution, and rallied his friends and vassals around him.

Mercar entreated his brother to visit the lady without any delay, and inform her of his having become a convert to her opinions in favour of the king; that Lord Edwin, who was to negociate with him, was also to plead with her and assure her of the earl's honour in his promises and of his instant compliance with her wishes, when a contract should be entered into. "Do this for *me* dear Edwin," said he, "and it may, haply, at some future time, be in my power to promote *your* suit with the lady you love."

Lord Edwin sighed, and the earl observed with a smile, "that sigh tells me that the heart of my brother is not freed from the claims of love—may your passion be propitious—say does any obstacle present itself?"

"None," answered Lord Edwin, "save the unhappy feuds that have rent asunder our country's dearest ties."

"Edwin," said the earl, "win my adored lady for me, and peace shall follow."

Most probably an explanation would then have followed respecting the Lady Matilda, had not Lord Beauchamp entered the tent to consult the earl upon some intended movement. Mercar instantly seized this occasion to hurry Edwin from the camp, knowing that he could not long remain there without learning the fate of Rynolph and his daughter; and, once more, breathing his anxious love, he despatched him towards Aspley without allowing him time to converse with any person.

As Lord Edwin rode onward he gave scope to a pleasing train of thoughts, arising from the happy change in Mercar's political sentiments, and the anticipations of his own speedy visit to Berkshire to announce the joyful tidings to the baron and his daughter. Little did the youthful hero imagine that he was but erecting "Castles in the Air." He reflected that his brother had observed, "all depended upon the lady's answer." Could it be other than auspicious? No, banished be every doubt. Earl Mercar was brave and handsome, and now, restored to loyalty, where could be the objection? Besides, if the lady were amiable as she was described lovely, she would surely rejoice in being made the instrument of so much good to her country, now bleeding at every pore from the horrors of intestine war.

Lord Edwin arrived speedily at Aspley-Guise, where he was received by Roberta to whom he was conducted by the warden, but with such a ludicrous expression of terror and dismay on his countenance, that he could not refrain from laughter. This symptom of mirth seemed to revive the trembling man, who faltered out, "And is your honour then real flesh and blood?" "Yes, my good fellow I hope so, but pray, most sapient Claude, for what did you take me?"

"A ghost, my lord, for we heard you were slain, but I rejoice it is not so."

"And I," said Edwin, "share in your joy, but you really were very civil to Captain Rodolpho, to wish to introduce a spectre into his presence."

"You seem gay, my dear young lord, I now trust you are the harbinger of good tidings."

Lord Edwin assured him he was—at that moment Rodolpho advanced to greet him; and though his surprise was visible enough, it was more rational, and less calculated to amuse his lordship, than the warden's had been. He showed the captain Earl Mercar's signet for admission to the presence of the lovely

captive, and that officer immediately went to communicate the message, the form whereof was given in the following words—that, "an officer of rank, from the king's army, requested to be honoured with an interview, if agreeable to the lady."

Lady Matilda assented to his immediate admission, and Rodolpho hastened, to signify her pleasure to Lord Edwin; she was in the most tremulous emotion at the message—What could it mean?—Who could it be?—Was it a dying farewell from her late lover, borne by a brother officer?

During this conflict of suspense, Lord Edwin entered. "'Tis he—'tis he himself!" she exclaimed, and fainted in the arms of Bertha, whose terror being similar to that of the warden, revealed itself in a loud shriek.

Matilda revived, and beheld Lord Edwin looking reproachfully at her—"Are you then," said he, "that perfidious girl with whom he sent me to treat?—Is he then your convert?—Oh! woman, who can rely on thy faith?—Death, by the keenest torture would have been preferable to me."

"Edwin, you wrong me, never, for a moment, has my heart strayed from thee. Involuntarily brought here, when I supposed to have been going to the Bridgetine convent at Westminster, I have remained a captive weeping thy supposed death—my father is also detained in Mercar's camp—Oh! pity me, Edwin, but do not blame your affectionate Matilda."

The dear lady might as well have bidden the elements when raging furiously, "be calm," or tell the coming tide to "retreat," as to reason or remonstrate with Lord Edwin. Jealousy, that hot-headed fiend, had absorbed his faculties, till his brain was agonized almost to distraction. "Yes," said he, "it is well, but I am not thus to be trifled with. Mercar told me a noble young lady only rejected his suit because he headed the rebel army, and detained her father prisoner; I am his ambassador, and have come to tell you the pleasing news, that my brother yields to William's proposed conditions, and your father's release consequently follows, the moment you are *his* by contract. The marriage he waives till a happier season, when all things are ratified."

"And you, Lord Edwin," said Matilda, "consented to come on this mission; was that well done I ask?"

"I came on the wings of hope and love, not knowing to whom, and little suspecting that Baron Rynolph's fair daughter was my brother's bride-elect. Oh! had I so thought, I had never taken

one step this way—you do not thank me—please to forget what I once was. Was Edwin ever dear to you?—If so, regard him no longer—consider me now as a stranger and the suitor for Earl Mercar. What answer shall I convey him? Though it burst my heart-strings to give it, yet shall I faithfully, and then betake me to another region to seek a *mistress-warfare* that leads to death."

"So then, I am not only suspected, but accused," said Matilda, "Earl Mercar has deceived you or deceived himself. Never did I promise him my love or my hand on any conditions. True, I have often blamed his apostacy and his severity in detaining my father, but, lest harm should happen to that revered head, did it with a moderation that should excite his pity rather than his pretensions. I told him candidly that my heart was in another's care, but he would not believe me, nor did I, for obvious reasons, give a further explanation. Oh! Edwin, from the hour of our last sad parting till now, never did I cease to regret you, and sigh forth your name in my orisons; even when your supposed death might, with one less faithful, be a plea to dissolve the most endearing ties; yea, even then, kneeling in my closet before the holy crucifix, I vowed, to the holy Virgin, celibacy for your sake."

"This is not—cannot be deception," said the youth. "Say, then, dearest Matilda, you are still the constant maid I ever, till now, supposed."

Matilda gave the desired assurrances to the gallant Edwin, and a reconciliation ensued. They then explained the events that had severally befallen them during their painful separation; but that most of all to be deplored, was her captivity, which, added to Mercar's passion for her, and the fatal consequences to which it might lead, filled them with the most painful apprehensions.

"Your return must be sudden," resumed the lovely Matilda.

"A few hours hence I am to meet him in his tent, there to inform him of your wishes."

"Bear to him my thanks," she continued, "for the offered honour of his alliance—tell him to persevere in his good intentions, and that my friendship and esteem are his while life lasts; but add, dearest Edwin, that I have impressed you, seriously, with the truth that my affections are solemnly plighted to another. We must, meanwhile, wait for more favourable times before we can hope to be united, lest he should be tempted to avenge on us what he might term deception. How hard to be forced to act thus. My soul abhors even this innocent duplicity; but I see no other alternative."

"Mine is a prior claim," said Edwin; "to none of my sex would I resign my affianced bride; but least of all to Mercar."

By one of those strange chances that serve to fill up the events of life, or change their current, it occurred that in speaking of the Baron Rynolph to one of his knights, (who had just entered the camp, after a short visit to the Continent, immediately after Edwin had taken leave for Aspley-Guise,) Mercar learned from him, the sorrowful fact, that his brother Edwin was the approved lover of the Lady Matilda.

The fury that was, in an instant, visible in the earl's countenance, surprised the informing youth, who had given the hint, unconscious of doing harm, and who regarded the circumstance as natural and likely to prove a very suitable alliance. He now, however, lamented his loquacity; but to retract from his sayings was impossible.

The earl, Richard-like, roared out for "a horse." He was soon mounted, and, taking Siward with him, he set forth with such velocity to Bedfordshire, that he arrived there nearly as soon as Lord Edwin.

Rodolpho, who had previously some suspicion that Edwin and his fair charge were lovers, no sooner perceived the earl, than he was fully convinced. He wished to have given them a warning of Mercar's approach, but the vigilance of the latter rendered this well-meant purpose wholly impracticable; and, to his surprise, the earl instantly ordered him, and a part of the soldiery, to repair to the camp, telling him, they would meet with a band on the road, coming to replace those who had been so long inactive.

To the captain, a widower without any domestic claimants, all situations or places were nearly equal. A man of more real and well-tried bravery did not exist. He was loth to leave the noble lovers in such a sad predicament; but to resist Mercar's orders, at such a moment, might be fatal. He caught the opportunity, as the men were preparing to march, of acquainting Siward with what he knew concerning Edwin and Matilda's former attachment, and his present apprehensions for their fate, concluding with commending them, as far as possible, to Siward's care and protection; "I know you can do much with the earl," was Rodolpho's remark.—"I did certainly," replied Siward, "once possess a great influence over him. My age and services gave me a full liberty of speech with him; yet, alack! this savage

warfare has greatly altered him; but, depend upon it, I will do my utmost."

Rodolpho was obliged to depart without seeing Bertha; but left with the dame a most tender message, expressive of fidelity in absence—an absence which, he trusted, circumstances and his own assiduity should render as short as possible.

Earl Mercar entered Lady Matilda's chamber just as Edwin was expressing his abhorrence at the idea of her becoming his brother's bride. He drew his sword, and darted between them; and, after upbraidings which violence dictated, and jealous rage inflamed, he ordered Siward to cast the delinquent youth into one of the dungeons beneath the western tower of the castle. Time had given Siward experience; he was aware that to offer any appeal in Edwin's favour would, then, be prejudicial to his interest; he obeyed, and called a guard to assist him in carrying Mercar's orders into execution.

The Lady Matilda pleaded in vain for Edwin; Mercar would not listen to her; but assured her that "all would be well, if she would give him her hand." These were the only conditions on which he would release his brother, whom he unjustly accused of vile hypocrisy. He implored her to take pity upon him,—to return his love—to mention a time for their union, in a word, to seal his happiness; but she was firm in her refusal of him, and in her unshaken fidelity to the beloved of her soul.

Her constancy filled Mercar with fury; in the heat of rage and disappointment, he commanded Siward to put the treacherous youth to death, and that the accomplishment of the deed should be announced by tolling of the castle bell. "I will, then," said he, "force Matilda to be mine—her unwillingness and resistance will be vain—Mercar scorns refusal from a woman.—He was not formed to cringe or stoop, and the haughty girl shall feel his power. I will be a very tyrant—Love, that converts some lovers into lambs, shall make me a beast of prey. If his daughter remain inexorable to my suit, Rynolph, also, shall perish. Are they not my captives, and at my disposal? I have been too merciful and forbearing. Away, Siward, away—I will not be spoken with; and, hence, know that your only merit is an humble obedience.

Siward was incapable of a deed of such complicated horror as to attempt the life of Edwin. "A brother dying by a brother's mandate!" said he, "and by my arm—never!"

In the dead of the night, when all was still in the castle, save the footsteps of the soldiers walking on the ramparts, and the sighs of the hapless Matilda, Siward descended into the dungeon, and imparted to Edwin the orders of Mercar: "Which, I suppose," answered the youth, "you are come to carry into effect—truly a gallant deed for an old warrior who has made many a Saxon 'bite the dust,' to turn assassin, and stab an unarmed man chained in a loathsome cell."

"My lord, you wrong me," was Siward's reply; "I am no murderer. I love too dearly the sons of my late master, to injure either. As governor of the castle, I can give you freedom. Depart instantly, and Heaven speed you with safety to the king's protection."

"But Matilda, good Siward, what will become of her?"

"I will be her guardian, and shield her from every danger," he replied, "or perish in her cause. Who would not do so for such an amiable being?" Having persuaded Edwin to depart, he set some refreshments before him, of which having hastily partaken, he followed the governor through a subterraneous passage terminating at a door that gave him egress near an adjacent wood. Furnished with a passport, he travelled unmolested in a close disguise, and arrived at the Castle of Windsor, whither the king repaired a few days before from Winchester, and by whom he was most cordially received. The sovereign had heard, with indignation, of his being a prisoner to Mercar; Edwin, on the other hand, generously concealed the danger from which he had been freed, intimating that he was released by the generosity of the earl, who now repented the part he had taken in the feuds; and would, he hoped, soon return to his allegiance with his numerous vassals.

William most graciously listened to intelligence so pleasing, and in the course of the following week, dispatched a nobleman to Earl Mercar with a conciliatory message.

Matilda, on the night of her lover's escape, was a prey to the most agonizing reflections. She thought of her dream, and compared Mercar to the fierce and destroying tiger; but who was to be the interposing lion, alas! she knew not. All seemed black despair in her path; she trembled for the fate of Edwin, though she was unacquainted with the cruel order the governor had received of putting him to death, Siward, out of pity, concealing it from her.

As soon as Lord Edwin had been allowed a few hours to make good his retreat, the governor caused the *awful bell* to toll, with most solemn and portentous sound. It struck on Mercar's ears; it pierced his very soul, and overwhelmed him with emotion! Were they the feelings of savagely triumphant exultation? No, it was bitter and unavailing remorse. He regarded himself in the light of a second Cain; imprecated Matilda's beauty, and the weakness of his own passion; upbraided Siward for so readily performing the horrid command, which had deprived a loved brother of existence; and seemed driven to the verge of madness and despair. Matilda, on hearing the bell, supposed it, not the finale, but the prelude to a tragedy, and that to prove the death of Edwin. She flew to the chamber where Earl Mercar was pacing with hasty strides, uttering curses on himself; she threw herself on her knees, exclaiming, "that fatal bell tolls for thy brether's life—yes, thy brother—listen to that fraternal name, and tremble at thy vileness. Oh! stay this deed of blood; and as you hope for happiness *here*, or, what is more important, hereafter, spare Edwin—give him life and freedom; and, though I will never be yours, yet, if that sacrifice will afford ease or satisfaction to your mind, I will also renounce him, and seek peace and resignation in a religious life. Yea, on these terms, I will take the veil, and in my orisons will ever remember to petition for the felicity of Earl Mercar."

This appeal was too much, it added agony to remorse. The Earl threw himself on the floor, and proclaimed himself the assassin of a beloved and most estimable brother. Matilda shrieked, and, starting from her supplicating posture, seized a poniard that lay on a table, and, through the delirium of despair, would have plunged it into her guileless bosom, but for the providential interference of Siward, who stayed her arm, and whispered that "Edwin lived, who was, by this time, far from the castle and the sound of the bell." Overcome with surprise and delight, the interesting mourner fainted, and was confided to the care of the sympathizing Bertha.

Earl Mercar was conveyed to his couch very ill, raving of his brother, Matilda, and the Baron Rynolph; the two latter he ordered to be set at liberty, without ransom or exchange, entreating that they would intercede for him with William, and not to hate his memory, as he resolved on death. He urged Siward to procure him a draught that would end his mental agony; and

the governor, at length, promised to obey. On the second morning afterwards, he retired from the chamber, as he said, for that purpose, and a cordial *draught* he did indeed bring, in the person of Lord Edwin.

Mercar, now, became the generous lion, he joined the hands of his brother and Lady Matilda; and having had a reconciliatory interview with the king and the Baron Rynolph, he resigned his title and estates to Lord Edwin. He then retired into the newly erected monastery of Saint Paul's, near Bedford, and took the cowl, living many years a much respected and valuable member of the community he joined; and nobly endowed the monastery out of his own personal property.

THE PEASANT GIRLS OF THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.

The dress of the women in these departments, especially the young and the pretty, is very fanciful, and, when neatly arranged, becoming, even to their extraordinary straw hat with high crown, and the sides curled up like ice-wafers. These sides are flapped down when the women work in the fields in the heat of the day, or carry their heavy baskets to market along the hot sandy road; in general, however, the lower classes are untidy, even to rags, dirty, even to disfigurement; and it is singular to see these poor wretches sitting at the door of cottages, whose interior might compare with an Irish cabin, plying the tambour-needle with a dexterity few of our fine ladies ever acquire. The most beautiful embroidered, web-like muslins of France have rested on knees clad in filthy tatters. It is painful to observe such neglect of a valuable and ingenious population; a neglect which must deteriorate them essentially; for extreme poverty and squalid habits are as pernicious to the mind as hurtful to the health. This contrast of the people to the country is melancholy; yet it appears that the Creator intended the one to harmonise with the other, so pretty and sometimes elegant are the features, and so pleasing the countenances, of almost all the young girls. Their spirits too, seem always buoyant; their step is light, much lighter and quicker than that of the good steady Normans.—*A Spinster's Tour in France.*

THE COUNTESS OF EXETER.

This amiable woman, who once gave a lustre to the title of Countess of Exeter, and who died, in 1797, lamented by all who knew her, rose to her rank and title by a singular train of circumstances.

When the late marquis was a minor, he married, at an early age, a lady from whom he was divorced in 1791. After the separation had taken place, the earl, his uncle, advised him to retire into the country, and live as a private gentleman. Mr. Cecil, accordingly, bent his course into a remote part of Shropshire; and, fixing his residence at an inn in a little rural village, he amused himself there for some months, passing by the name of Jones. As he had plenty of money, and was extremely liberal to all about him, some persons in the neighbourhood, conceiving a notion that he had not come honestly by his riches, grew suspicious of him and shunned his company. Others took him for an Indian nabob; and, as he passed along, he often heard the rustics exclaim, "There goes the London gentleman!"

Taking a dislike to his situation at the inn, he sought out a farm-house, where he might board and lodge: several families had refused to take him in because he was "too fine a gentleman, and because they could not understand how he came by his money." At length, he found a situation which answered his purpose; and, in consideration of his liberal offers, and the knowledge of his possessing money, a farmer fitted up a room for him. Here he continued to reside for about two years, going to London twice in the year, and returning with such money as he had occasion for. When he departed, the country people thought he was gone to gather in his rents; and became more assured of this, from his always returning with plenty of cash.

Time hanging heavy on his hands, he purchased some land, on which he intended to build a house; but, for the reasons mentioned, neither stone-mason nor carpenter would undertake the job. He did not condescend to contradict the reports of the villagers; but, offering to pay so much of the money before hand, the tradesmen, after some grave consultation together, agreed to finish his work; this was done accordingly, and every person was paid the extent of his deman ds.

The farmer, at whose cottage his lordship resided, had a

daughter, about seventeen years of age, whose rustic beauties threw, at an infinite distance, all that his lordship had ever beheld in the circle of fashion: the softest roses that ever modesty poured upon youth and loveliness, glowed upon her lips; her cheeks were tinged with the divine bloom of Hebe; and the purity of the huntress nymph was in her breast.

Although this charming maid was placed in an humble lot of life, his lordship perceived that her beauty would adorn, and her virtue shed a lustre on the most elevated situation. One day, when the farmer returned from his plough, Mr. Cecil frankly told him and his wife, that he liked their daughter Sarah, and would marry her if they would give their consent.

"Marry our daughter!" exclaimed Mrs. Higgins, "what, to a fine gentleman! No indeed!"

"Yes, marry her," said the husband, "he shall marry her, for she likes him;—has he not house, and land too, and plenty of money to keep her?"

In fine, the matter was arranged, and Mr. Cecil married the charming rustic. Masters of every kind were now procured; and, in twelve months, Mrs. Cecil became an accomplished woman, to the envy of the country girls around, and to the astonishment of the villagers, who now began to be reconciled to the supposed too fine gentleman.

It was not long before news arrived of his uncle's death, in December, 1793, when he found it nessary to repair to town. He accordingly set out, taking his wife with him, as on a tour of pleasure; and, on his journey, called at the seats of several noblemen, where, to the utter astonishment of his wife, he was welcomed in the most friendly manner. At last, they arrived at Burleigh, in Northamptonshire, the beautiful patrimonial seat of his lordship; and, approaching the house, he asked, with an air of unconcern, whether she would like to be mistress of that mansion? on which she exclaimed, "That it exceeded all she had ever seen, and was of all places in the world that in which she could wish to reside." "Then," said he, "it is yours!" and, on making his appearance in front of the house, he was instantly recognised and received with acclamations of joy by the family and domestics.

As soon as he had settled his affairs, he returned into Shropshire; discovered his rank to his wife's father and mother; put them into the house he had built there; and settled on them an

income of seven hundred pounds per annum. He afterwards took the countess with him to London, introduced her to the fashionable world, where she was respected and admired until her death, which happened on the 18th of January, 1797; after giving birth to a son on the 1st. Besides an inconsolable husband, she left two sons and a daughter, heirs to the family honors.

THE WEDDING FINGER.

THERE are few objects amongst the productions of art, contemplated with such lively interest by ladies, after a certain age, as the simple and unadorned annular implement of Hymen, yclept the Wedding Ring; this has been a theme for poets of every calibre; for geniuses of every wing, from the dabbling duckling to the solar eagle. The mouldy antiquary can tell the origin of the custom with which it is connected, and perchance why a ring is round, and account for many circumstances concerning the ceremony of the circlet, on the most conclusive evidence, amounting to absolute conjectural demonstration; amidst all that has been said and written in reference to the ring, I believe the more lovely part engaged in the mystic matter, the taper residence of this ornament has been neglected; now, this is rather curious, as there are facts belonging to the ring finger, which render it in a peculiar manner an appropriate emblem of matrimonial union; it is the only finger where *two* principal nerves belong to two distinct trunks; the thumb is supplied with its principal nerves from the radial nerve, as is also the fore finger, the middle finger, and the thumb side of the ring finger, whilst the ulnar nerve furnishes the little finger and the other side of the ring finger, at the point or extremity of which, a real union takes place; it seems as if it were intended by nature to be the matrimonial finger.

That the side of the ring finger next the little finger is supplied by the ulnar nerve, is frequently proved by a common accident, that of striking the elbow against the edge of a chair, a door, or any narrow hard substance; the ulnar nerve is then frequently struck, and a thrilling sensation is felt in the little finger, and on the same side of the ring finger, but not on the other side of it.

PRIZE ESSAY.

"VIEW OF THE HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY; MORAL, POLITICAL, AND CIVIL STATE OF ANCIENT AND MODERN AFRICA."

(*Concluded from page 97.*)

WESTERN AFRICA.

SENEGAMBIA AND GUINEA.

At Cape Coast Castle, the British government maintains an establishment. The castle is a large and commodious building, containing comfortable apartments for the officers, and good barracks for the privates; besides many excellent warehouses, where the property of our merchants is lodged in the event of war with the natives. There are also excellent tanks for the supply of water in the dry season, or when blockaded. The guns are kept in good order, and well mounted. The bastions have been well paved, and the whole of the castle wonderfully improved. It is built on a rock close to the sea.

The town of Cape Coast is situated behind the castle. It is not laid out upon any regular plan, like Sierra Leone or Senegal. The officers and merchants have built some comfortable houses with stone, in the town, and also a few neat cottages, a short distance in the country, which have a pleasing effect, and are considered more healthy, as residences, than the castle.

The natives in this part of Africa are Pagans. It is true they have fetish men or priests; but these ignorant wretches do more harm than good, frequently practising the most shameful excesses upon their still more ignorant and superstitious followers. They appear, however, to have some idea of a Supreme Being, whom they call Yaung Coompon; and when they hear thunder they will sometimes remark, that it is Yaung Coompon riding in his carriage. Their usual method of offering sacrifices is to break eggs, and leave them on the ground, which they consecrate to the Fetish; some tie a piece of string round a stone, and leave it on the public path; others cut out a small wooden image, and fasten it to their doors, which they daily worship.

At some of our settlements on the coast human sacrifices have frequently been made, on the death of a person of distinction. On one occasion, in 1809, at Commenda, twenty miles from Cape Coast, a poor woman was sacrificed, to "water the grave," as it

is called; but the manner in which it was done was humane, in comparison with the method which is sometimes used in torturing the victim. This woman's head was severed from her body, by one blow with a sort of bill, the executioner was immediately taken upon men's shoulders, and carried round the town in triumph, for not having mangled the body.

The climate of Ashantee is considered more healthy than on the coast. The inhabitants are very subject to dysentery, from the marshes which surround the capital: it rains at intervals six months in the year. Mr. Bowdich estimates the population of Ashantee at a million; but he has greatly overrated it. The population of Coomassie may be about 15 or 20,000; the men are not so strongly made as the Fantees; but the women are generally handsomer in their persons, and more pleasing in their manners,

"Coomassie is built upon the side of a large rocky hill of ironstone, it is an oblong of upwards of three miles in circumference; four of the principal streets are half a mile long, and fifty yards wide; they have all a name, and a principal captain resides in each of them. There are about twenty-seven streets in all."

The Slave Coast, in the strictest acceptation, includes the states of Coto, Popo, Widah, and Ardra. The maritime flat country here is broader than that of the Gold Coast, and extremely fertile. Poultry are in uncommon abundance, and the air is darkened by flocks of bats and dense clouds. The French had a trading settlement at Widah,or Judah, and the Portuguese sell their tobacco at Port Novo. The small states of the sea coast are subject to the king of Dahomey; who, by his conquests, raised himself from the rank of a small proprietor to that of a great African monarch. He has only about two hundred miles of sea coast; and though he can bring into the field a considerable army, yet being every where surrounded by enemies, he would soon be expelled from the maritime parts, if he were not supported by the European forts. His villages are large and populous. Abomy, the capital of this kingdom, is situated at a distance of eighty miles from the coast, and contains 24000 inhabitants. It is built without any order or regularity; and is surrounded by a ditch so deep that lofty trees, planted at the bottom, reach very little above the surface; over this ditch are four wooden bridges, each having a guard-house, in which soldiers are stationed. The king has here two palaces, each inclosed by

a mud wall about twenty feet high; he has two pleasure houses, also, at Clamina and Agona, where he most commonly lives. These palaces are only a better sort of cottages, contained within a park more than half a mile broad, surrounded by an earthen wall.

The accounts that are given of the Dahomans murdering their prisoners taken in war, are excessively revolting to the feelings of Europeans. Many hundreds are often put to death at a time. Mr. Dalzel speaks of four thousand inhabitants of Widah having, in one instance, been sacrificed by the king of Dahomey, "as a noble and valuable present to his gods and forefathers." The skulls of many of these are fixed on small wooden stakes, and arranged, at intervals, to ornament the walls or thatched roofs of the royal palaces. In allusion to this practice, when the king issues orders of war, he only announces to his general, "that his house wants thatch."

East of Dahomey, and south from the Eyeos, lies the kingdom of Benin, the king of which can bring 100,000 men into the field. The river which the Portuguese call Rio Formoso, is very broad at its mouth, and has been navigated as high as Agathon, one of the chief towns, about forty miles north-east from the sea. The road from Benin to Agathon is much frequented, and lined with very tall and strong trees, which afford an abundant shade. The city of Benin, on the river of the same name, is surrounded with deep ditches; and there are traces of an earthen wall by which it has been protected. It is pleasantly situated on a plain shaded by lofty trees, and watered by the river. The streets are fifteen feet broad; the houses low, covered with the leaves of the mawcaw-tree, and kept exceedingly clean. There are no stones in this country, and the soil is so soft, that the river detaches several acres at a time. The moveable islands, thus formed, are the dread of seamen. The vast palace of the king, on the outside of the city, is defended by walls: it contains some handsome apartments, and fine galleries supported by wooden pillars. The market is not adapted to the taste of Europeans; the leading articles are dogs' flesh, of which the negroes are very fond; roasted monkeys, bats, rats, and lizards; it also contains delicious fruits, and goods of all descriptions. The climate is one of the most deadly to the European constitution. M. Palisot Beauvoise calls it pestilential. The inhabitants of Benin have the same laws and customs as the

people of Dahomey. The king, who is venerated as a demi-god, is believed to live without aliment; and when he dies, is believed to lose only his former body, in order to revive under another shape. At the festival of yams he plants a root in a pot of earth, in the presence of the whole people. Immediately after it, another pot is presented with a juggling dexterity, containing a root which has begun to bud. This miracle inspires the credulous spectators with the hopes of a good harvest. Human sacrifices form part of the propitiatory worship offered to the avenging, or evil genius.

We have now laid before our readers a copious account of the continent of Africa; and, as the islands which appertain to this part of the world are well known and accurately described by geographers, we shall not protract this essay—already perhaps in the estimation of some of our readers too long—by details with which every one is familiar. There is one of the African islands, however, which deserves mention here, in consequence of a recent attempt to make it available to the interests of humanity by using it as an asylum for emancipated slaves. We allude to Fernando Po.

It was among the numerous discoveries made by the Portuguese towards the end of the fifteenth century; and from its beautiful appearance this island received, from Fernao do Po the discoverer, the name of Ilha de Formosa: this name, however, it soon lost, and, for the last three centuries, has been known only by that of Fernando Po. The Portuguese built a fort on this island, but for some reason or other shortly quitted it altogether, and, about the middle of the last century, exchanged it with the Spaniards for the small island of Trinidad, situated about five hundred miles from the coast of Brazil, opposite to the bay of Espirito Santo.

The new possessors attempted to form a settlement upon it, but very soon abandoned the design and the island together, alleging, as a reason, the ferocity of the natives. Since that period, so rare has been even the casual visit of an European vessel, that the present generation of islanders had never seen one till the Pheasant sloop of war made her appearance there a few years since; when Captain Kelly was visited by a man of colour, a native of Martinique, who called himself Tom Dixon, but was certainly not a Frenchman. This man appeared to be about forty years of age, thirty of which he had passed upon the island. He had sailed from Philadelphia as

a boy, in the Mary, Captain Anderson, for the river Bonny, to trade for palm oil, and on the homeward voyage was wrecked on the iron bound coast of Fernando Po; of twelve seamen, five only were saved, and of these he was the sole survivor, the rest having died several years ago. His language was that of the natives, mixed with a few words of French and English. Captain Kelly offered to take him from the island, but this he declined, as he had two wives and a family of children, and lived happily among them. From this person Captain Kelly expected to obtain much information respecting the inhabitants and the state of the island, but he did not make his appearance a second time; being probably afraid that he should be discovered, and claimed as an Englishman! or perhaps prevented by the natives from an impression that he, who was able to converse in some degree with the strangers, would get more than his share of knives and other articles, which were given in exchange for poultry, yams, and other species of provisions.

The appearance of the island is extremely beautiful; its length from north to south is about thirty miles, and its breadth about twenty. Two high peaked mountains, (one of them remarkably so,) the black sand on the beach, and the scoriæ and other substances which had evidently undergone the action of fire, denotes it to be of volcanic origin. From the northern extremity the land rises, a gradual slope is covered with a forest of trees of the most luxuriant growth. Beyond this region of wood, the crest of the hills, and the sides of the mountains as far up as about one-third of their height, appeared to be generally in a state of cultivation; on the summits of these hills stands the towns and villages of the natives. The houses are of wicker work, all nearly of the same size and plan; they are built round an open area, and each is surrounded with a railed fence or enclosure, within which their cattle are shut up at night. The means of subsistence must be abundant, as the price of a sheep or goat, was a common knife, of the value of threepence, and a piece of iron hoop, a couple of inches in length, would purchase two or three of their finest fowls.

Captain Kelly describes the inhabitants as a fine race of people; they are, he says, of a middle stature, with limbs well formed, muscular, and active; their countenances very peculiar, the general contour of the face being that of a square with the angles rounded off; the nose, the lips, and the quick and

piercing eye, approaching much nearer to the European than the African features: they have woolly hair, which, being twisted and daubed with red clay behind, appears like strings of candles dangling from their heads. This decoration was common to both sexes. Like most savages, they wear round their neck, wrists, ankles, and loins, the vertebræ of snakes, the skulls and jaw-bones of monkeys and other wild animals, and strings of shells of various colours. The hue of the skin was evidently black; but they were all so completely covered with a reddish coloured clay and palm oil, and their faces so besmeared with fine pulverized yellow ochre, as to give them the appearance of mulattoes.

The language of these people was not more different from that of the continental negroes than their manners and appearance; for, although the Pheasant was provided with interpreters for the whole line of coast, from Sierra Leone to Calabar, not one of them understood a single syllable that they uttered. Neither did it appear that the superstitious veneration of the fetish, so universal along the coast of Africa, was at all known to the natives of Fernando Po.

Numberless little streams were trickling down the sides of the hills into a noble bay on the north-west side of the islands, besides three very considerable rivers, one at each extremity, and the third about the middle of the bay; at all of which, ships may water with the utmost facility. A small island covered with wood, (which may be procured here in any quantity,) and inhabited by about a hundred families, who subsist by fishing, affords shelter to that part of the bay within it. Though the thermometer of Fahrenheit rose to eighty-six degrees in the afternoon, the land and sea-breezes gave to the temperature a freshness quite unknown on the adjacent coast. And as a proof of the goodness of the climate, it may be observed that no appearance of those loathsome diseases, elephantiasis, scrophula, guinea-worn, hydrocele, &c. to which the negroes are so subject, was perceptible among the many hundreds who crowded to the coast on the occasion of this visit. To the bay, round which the country rises in a grand and beautiful amphitheatre, Captain Kelly, gave the name of George's Bay. Next to the bay of Naples, (he says) I know of no place more capable of being converted to a finished picture by the hand of art and industry than this; let only the immense forest on the slope give place to cultivated plantations of sugar-canes, the brows of the hills be

studded with coffee trees, and a town, of sufficient importance to form the capital of the island, be built on the rising ground near the east angle of the bay, where a river would flow beneath it, navigable for boats drawing seven and eight feet of water; and Fernando Po would far surpass any of the islands of the British possessions in the West Indies.

We have been induced to give this brief sketch of an island, which, though so near home, has not, to our knowledge, ever been described, chiefly because it is considered by Captain Kelly as a most eligible spot for employing the captured negroes, instead of sending them a long voyage of six or eight weeks to Sierra Leone; for checking, and probably destroying, the present abominable traffic of slaves in the neighbourhood of the equator; and for establishing a legitimate trade with the interior of Africa, through the channels of the numerous navigable rivers falling into the Gulf of Guinea, and the heights of Benin and Biafra, as the new Calabar, Bonni, Crass River, Old Calabar, and the Rio del Rey; the Cameroons, St. Renito, D'Angra, and Gabon; all of which would then not only become sources of wealth to Great Britain, but the connexion to which they would lead, might be the means of materially facilitating the introduction of Christianity and civilization among the much injured and long depressed natives of this part of Africa.

PIN MONEY—THE HONEY MOON.

Pins were acceptable new year's gifts to the ladies, instead of the wooden skewers which they used till the end of the fifteenth century. Sometimes they received a composition in money; and hence allowances for their separate use, is still denominated "Pin-money." Gloves were customary new year's gifts. They were more expensive than in our times, and occasionally a money present was tendered instead; this was called "Glove-money."

The origin of the term Honey Moon is not less curious. It was the custom of the higher order of the Teutones, an ancient people who inhabited the northern parts of Germany, to drink Mead, or Metheglin, a beverage made with *honey*, for thirty days after every wedding. From this custom, comes the expression, "to spend the Honey-moon."

THE DESERTED FORGE.

A Legend of the South of Ireland.

A DECEMBER evening was falling fast, when a traveller left the Inn of Kilworth, to pursue his journey by moonlight over the solitary mountains which divide the counties of Cork and Tipperary. He was a man of middle age, of an athletic frame, silent and reserved in his manner, and of a singularly stern and forbidding aspect; he was apparently a stranger in the country, and his whole appearance bespoke him a traveller, rather for business, than for pleasure;—he was wrapped in a large horseman's cloak, well mounted on a powerful black horse, and carried pistols in his holsters.

As he was leaving the village, his horse cast a shoe, which compelled him to halt at a neighbouring forge: the smith was a man little liked by his neighbours, and many strange reports respecting his former avocations were afloat in the country. The traveller and he took but little notice of each other until the horse was shod; but when the smith was receiving payment, a large scar on the stranger's right hand attracted his attention;—he raised his eyes to his face with an expression of surprise, but the instant he caught the dark stern visage of the traveller, bronzed by the ruddy light of the forge, the blood fled from his cheek, and with a half smothered cry of horror, he dropped the money on the ground,—the eyes of the stranger literally flashed fire, and his dusky form half seen by the flickering light, seemed to dilate with very rage.—"Hush," said he, in a deep voice that the smith recognized right well,—there was a dead silence—the smith looked fearfully round as if he thought the very walls had ears.—"Oh! blessed virgin," said he in a low voice, wiping his forehead with the back of his hand, "are you come for me at last,—ogh and its little them that's watching for you in the mountains, know who the'are waiting for,—and must I go wid you?"—"Is not the hour come?" said the stranger sternly. "Sure enough," said the smith with a groan;—"you'll be met on the road," added he, in a lower voice, "for as I tould you, there's them waiting that thinks to stop you—and the loading of your pistols is drawn—and the road over the mountain is set." The brow of the stranger grew dark as midnight, but he spoke not a word, he drew the pistols from the holster. The smith had told him the truth, the charge was gone but the priming was untouched. The smith

watched him with an anxious eye as he turned towards the fire, and loaded them again. A faint and ghastly smile curled his lip for a moment, contrasting strangely with the deep gloom of his brow. The very heart of the smith died within him. The stranger replaced his pistols, and walking slowly to the door of the hut, looked forth into night. It was dark and gloomy—the moon had not yet arisen—the clouds were gathering in shapeless and heavy masses, above the tops of the lofty mountains; and the wind came along, with that moaning, melancholy sound, which forebodes a coming storm. "In an hour," said he, "the moon will rise; till then I will remain here, and at twelve to night, you will see me again:"—so saying he closed the door, fastened his horse to the wall, and, wrapping himself in his cloak, sat down on a stone bench opposite the fire;—the smith took his seat at some distance, and both relapsed into perfect silence.

At length the moon appeared struggling with the huge and shadowy masses of clouds, that racked along the sky. The stranger again looked forth into the night, then turning his horse, drew the girths, and led him to the door. The smith watched him in silence. The stranger, before he mounted again, slowly turned towards him, fixing his eyes on him with the strange expression I have already noticed. The wretched smith hid his face with his hands, nor did he stir until the sound of the horse-tramp, as it rang hollowly on the frosty ground, assured him that the stranger was gone. He watched him, as long as he was in sight,—his tall dark figure still taller and darker in the moonlight, as his horse strode at a rapid pace up the mountain road; at length he disappeared in the distance, and the smith returned to his hut. He closed and barred the door, accumulating every possible fastening, with the quick and nervous haste of one under the influence of overpowering fear; but suddenly stopping—"ogh, its all no use," said he, "its all no use, and sure I know it. I might as well strive and keep out the wind;" and with that, he sat, or rather sank down on the seat he had left.

The traveller was pursuing his road, and had reached the top of the mountain. He reined his horse, and cast his eyes around. The prospect was dreary and wild to the last degree; a wide extent of barren and uninhabited bog, lay on either side the road, its monotonous uniformity, only broken by patches of snow, or piles of rocks; lofty mountains of the same cheerless and dreary character occupied the distance, and the only vestige of human

habitation, was a ruined and roofless cabin, which stood by the roadside, at a short distance; its low black walls scarcely distinguishable, even in the moonlight, from the bog, of which they once had been a part. The traveller drew his right-hand pistol from his holster, cocked it, and gathering up the reins, proceeded at a slow pace, keeping a watchful eye on the ruined hut, yet not so as to attract attention; as he passed the door, a man sprang into the road, he had a blunderbuss in his hand, but while he was actually in the spring, the traveller laid him dead at his feet. He replaced his pistol, and deliberately alighted from his horse:—the moon had broken from the clouds, and was shining bright and clear:—he turned the dead man on his back—the pale clear light fell upon his face:—his eyes were fixed and staring, and, though he passed without a groan, the parting pang had left an horrible expression on his livid features. The stranger bent over his victim—his dusky form and sallow brow yet darker in the shade;—he gazed on him intently; and as he looked, he laughed, until the very rocks rang back the echo of his ghastly mirth. He left the dead man where he lay, and, remounting his horse, returned to Kilworth. It was almost twelve when he reached the inn:—he rapped loudly and long:—at length the door opened.—"Where is your master?" said he to the waiter. "In bed, sir, these two hours." Call him," said the stranger, "I must see him immediately." There was something of working in his tone as he spoke. "I durst not, sir," said the waiter, evidently disconcerted, "I could not rouse him now for any one." "You are right, friend," said the stranger, "it will take a louder voice than yours to awaken him now, but if you have a mind to try your skill, you will find him on the top of yonder mountain." So saying, he turned his horse from the door, leaving the waiter rooted to the spot. Of the rest of that fatal night nothing is known, in the morning the body was found, and a warrant was issued for the apprehension of the smith. But his forge was closed, his cabin deserted, and he was heard of in that country no more. I, myself have seen that ill-omened forge. It is in ruins; its situation is wild and solitary in the extreme. The grey-headed peasant who pointed it out, told me the singular story I have just related:—he remembered well the very night. When he had done, he lowered his voice, and swore by the Holy Cross, that he himself had often heard when passing that spot, in the deep gloom of a winter night, the clang of sledge and anvil sounding from the ruined forge.

WANDERINGS IN FRANCE.

MALMAISON.

Our equipage crossed the magnificent allée of the Champs Elysées, the most appropriate entrance to one of the greatest cities in Europe; we successively found ourselves near that triumphal arch, so slow in its raising—before the Bois de Boulogne, so attractive from the shade it affords to the promenaders, to duellists, and to lovers;—at the foot of Mount Valérien, where the eye discovers such beautiful points of view. We passed through Nanterre, the birth-place of the first patron of Paris: Nanterre, which the Parisians value only on account of the cakes to which it has given the name; and after the lapse of a few minutes the iron gates of Malmaison were opened to us.

The first entrance is very simple; and soon we perceived the chateau, the exterior of which has no very imposing appearance. A keeper served to introduce us. The eating-room, the billiard-room, the drawing-room, were all decorated with much taste, but presented nothing particularly striking or worth attention. I was more affected at seeing the grand vestibule deserted, the sentry-boxes empty, and the gallery where so many great personages used to assemble in crowds round a powerful name of high renown. A few Swiss soldiers and villagers accompanied us, and trod with us that same flooring which had shaken under the steps of the most extraordinary mortal of modern time.

We entered the library: the daylight was half shut out by the closed window-blinds. This darkness had in it something solemn; at the lower end was a simple bureau of mahogany, an arm-chair used for writing, whereon was formerly seated, as was said, the host of these interesting scenes, and whereon is yet imprinted the marks of the penknife which he held during the occupation of his meditative ideas. The shelves are covered with books very shabbily bound, and almost all relating to history or science. Here and there were models of ships, flat-bottomed boats, and various objects of art.

We ascended the first story; we were shown into a chamber luxuriantly decorated, at the lower part of which the most elegant draperies ornamented a bed profusely gilt: this was the chamber occupied by the female who loved her husband with that disinterested passion which taught her, for the sake of his glory, to yield him to another; that was the bed on which she died! There was nothing else in the chateau deserving our curiosity.

NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE, WRITINGS, AND OPINIONS OF THE REV. SAMUEL PARR, LL. D. &c. By the Rev. William Field. 2 vols. 8vo. 1828.

In Dr. Parr were united great virtues and great talents. An uncouth exterior could not conceal the kindness of his nature; and few men have ever been more eager to do benevolent acts. As a Christian pastor, he lived usefully, and died regretted; and as a teacher of youth, he saw, in his latter years, the talents of his pupils reflect honour upon their venerable preceptor. He had, like many good and great men, his eccentricities; but his little failings were never allowed to interfere with his more immediate duties; and, most assuredly, where there is so much to admire, the few faults of his character ought not to be dwelt on.

Dr. Parr's literary friends have been eager to do justice to his memory; and in Mr. Field he has found an able and a judicious biographer. The work on our table is every way worthy of the deceased, and does honour to the writer. He has omitted nothing respecting Dr. Parr which deserved to be known; and his partiality has not betrayed him into tiresome details. The style is correct, the anecdotes numerous, and the notices of contemporaries interesting. The following extract will amuse our fair readers: the gallantry of a scholar like Dr. Parr is no small compliment to female excellence.

"Dr. Parr was accustomed to speak with something of the gallantry of old times of the intelligent and accomplished females, whom he had the pleasure to reckon in the number of his friends or acquaintance. In one of his early publications, he has noticed with approbation, the higher rank in the scale of intellectual and moral improvement, and even of literary distinction, to which women, of late years, have successfully aspired. 'They are no longer considered,' says he, 'as being what the God of heaven and earth never intended they should be—a useless incumbrance, or a glittering but empty ornament. They are found to be capable both of contributing to our convenience, and of refining our pleasures. Their weakness is, therefore, protected; their fine sensibilities become the object of a regard, which is founded on principle as well as on affection; and their talents are called forth into public notice. Hence the excellence which some of them have displayed in the elegant accomplishments of painting, music, and poetry, in the nice discriminations of biography, in the broader researches of history, and in moral compositions, where the subject is illuminated by the graces of an unaffected and natural eloquence. The truth

of this assertion will be readily admitted in an age like our own, which may boast of an Aikin and a More, a Sheridan and a Stewart, a Brooke and a Burney, a Carter and a Montagu.'

"The excellencies of female character, as presented to his own immediate observation, Dr. Parr was always quick in discerning, and fervent in admiring. Of Mrs. Sheridan, the mother of the celebrated orator, the third among the names just enumerated, he often spoke in terms of high and enthusiastic praise. He said that he had several times seen her, and that she was 'quite celestial.' A monumental inscription, drawn up by him, commemorates the honour and the happiness of the husband, in having for his wife 'the ingenious and amiable author of *Sydney Biddulph*, and of several dramatic pieces, which have been well received.' With equal or greater admiration, Dr. Parr used to talk of the first wife of Mr. Sheridan; and delighted to describe the extraordinary fascination of her person and manners, and the still more powerful attractions of her understanding and her heart. He cordially joined in the compliment of a distinguished prelate, that 'she seemed to be the connecting link between angels and women.' During his occasional visits in London, he generally passed a day or two with her venerable mother, Mrs. Linley, then living, at an advanced age, in Southampton-street, Covent-garden. He said that he could discern in her countenance many of the traits which he had admired in her daughter; and, in reference to her, he remarked that a fine woman in years is viewed with the same sort of feeling with which an old Roman would behold the Temple of the Gods in ruins.

"Of the literary ladies of his time, whose works he praised, and in whose society he delighted, one was Mrs. Opie. 'She unites in herself,' said he to a friend, 'qualities which we seldom see combined in the same female. She is well-looking; she writes well, she talks well, sings well, dances well; and is altogether not only a very amiable, but a very fascinating woman.' The writer, who had the pleasure of meeting, some years ago, Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton, at Hatton, well remembers the cordial welcome, and the respectful attentions, with which she was received and entertained by her delighted host. Always animated in company, he seemed on that occasion to exceed himself in vivacity and gaiety of spirits; and to rejoice in the opportunity of doing honour to a lady of so much literary fame; and still more nobly distinguished by the deep-fixed religious principles, and the high-toned moral sentiments, which marked her character. Dr. Parr entertained the highest respect for the genius and virtues of Mrs. Barbauld, whose earthly course terminated nearly at the same time with his own. The opportunity of personal interviews did not often occur; but the writer, in the habit of visiting both, was often the bearer of messages of kind inquiry and friendly remembrance from one to the other.

"Of one excellent lady, now living, Dr. Parr said 'she is for angels to

admire, and for men to imitate;' and of another lady, 'that her heart has the purity of crystal, without its hardness, and all its brightness, without any of its coldness.' In the fly-leaf of 'Rivarol-Discours préliminaire du nouveau Dictionnaire de la Langue Française,' is inscribed as follows: 'This book was given to Dr. Parr by his beautiful, witty, sagacious truth-speaking, warm-hearted, and unfortunate friend, Mrs. A. Green, of Lan-Saint Frede, Monmouthshire.'

"Writing to a female friend, thus he expresses himself:—'My dear H—,—Your eyes would have started with tears of joy, if you had read a letter which came to me this morning from two enlightened and pure-hearted ladies. If my frame were stronger, earth would be, in my present condition, almost an anticipation of heaven; and to Him who dwelleth in heaven, my soul ought to be and is grateful for the exquisite and hallowed pleasure He has enabled me to feel from the society of the great, the wise, and the virtuous.'"

THE BATTLE OF NAVARIN, AND OTHER POEMS. By a Naval Officer. London, 1828.

This is, decidedly, the most miserable attempt at poetry which we have, for sometime met, and we regret to observe that the absence of talent is supplied by a bitter spirit of envy; the author's slander however is as impotent as his poetical efforts are feeble.

A JOURNEY TO MAROCCO, IN 1826. By G. Beauclerk, Tenth Infantry. London, 1828.

We regret that we cannot recommend this volume to our fair readers. Captain Beauclerk is, no doubt, as brave and gallant as any officer in the Welch Fusiliers, but, unfortunately, delicacy of sentiment and propriety of language are things to which he is an utter stranger. In his various wanderings he has mixed but little, we are sure, in female society; or perhaps deeming, like the Mahometans he visited, that ladies were devoid of souls, he resolved that his travels should be a sealed book to their fair eyes. They cannot peruse his volume; some of his details are grossly indelicate; and we regret this the more, as in other respects the work is sufficiently entertaining. The illustrations are pretty, and very well executed on stone.

The Sultan of Marocco having sent to Gibraltar for a physician, Dr. Brown set out for the capital of Barbary. He was accompanied by Captain Beauclerk and another gentleman. We have an amusing account of their country, but the climate not agreeing with their health, they were ill during their residence, and were ultimately obliged to take a premature departure. The people of the country are wretched in the extreme; they have many good qualities, but their religion keeps them barbarous. The

Jews are numerous in Barbary, and appear to have interested Captain Beauclerk much. He says:

"The Jews, I should imagine, form at least the third part of the population of the towns in this country. The successive Sultans who have ruled over these dominions, have found it their interest to protect the lives and property of Israel's fated race, and to encourage their desire for trade, by which policy they are enabled by more means than *fair taxation*, to raise large sums of money upon any emergency; but with the cunning of a rat-catcher, (who never destroys his own trade) they take care not to disable their victims by these repeated *loans*, as they are called. A very little, however, suffices to set a Jew up again in business, so persevering is his pursuit of that wealth which he knows but conduces in the end to purchase him the bastinado. In all the towns of the kingdom, except Tangiers, the Jews are allotted a separate quarter from the Moors, at the gate of which a Caid is placed, with authority to prevent the entrance of their Moorish brethren, and at night the gate is closed, and the keys taken to the house of the governor. No considerations of poverty seem ever to prevent marriage amongst them, though riches are generally matched to the same, by affiancing the children at an early age. This practice of affiancing is productive of much happiness between the married pair in after life, who from childhood, have learned to humour each other's foibles, and it also checks that romantic passion of love, so cherished in enlightened countries, where the fair one's determination to choose for herself, but too often entails miserable consequences on herself and her friends; but such is the effect of a society where art has superseded nature, where many a beautiful young girl languishes through the ripeness of her youth, in vain endeavours to find the beau ideal of her circulating library education, and is finally obliged either to surrender her charms at the instigation of mamma into the hands of a Midas with the ears of "an ass, an ass" or eke out her uninteresting existence in the mal-appropriation of her sex's ornament—affection, which finding no return from the bosom of her first idol, man, vents itself in the care of pug-dogs and parrots.

"Far different is it amongst those of whom I speak, where each young heart finds its responsive beat in the bosom it has learned to think its own, nor destroys the present joy by anticipating, however poor, the prolific consequences of the future. By this state of things, however, the poorer classes remain poor, while the richer increase their wealth in the opposite ratio.

"Amongst the higher classes of the Jews who can afford to build large houses, it is customary for all branches of the family to live together; thus you may see five and six generations in the same tenement, all looking up to the father of the whole as a patriarch, and treating him with great respect and kindness. This sight, I must say, is very gratifying. The

Jews in this country are a very fair specimen of objection to that argument which has often been advanced to prove that the human race degenerates by breeding *in-and-in* (if the sportsman's term may be allowed me for want of one expressive of the same signification, applicable to man). It is impossible to find a finer race of men, or a more angelic one of females, than are these people. The Jewish male children are in their infancy exquisitely beautiful, and it astonishes a stranger not a little, when surrounded by what might pass for angels and cherubim, he looks in vain for a handsome face amongst the grown-up males. This I attribute to the constant debasement of their minds, in which the thoughts of servility, avarice, deceit, and the meanest subtlety, are daily gaining the ascendancy over the more radiant virtues of nature, visible in the jocund open countenance of extreme youth."

THE BEAUTIES OF DON JUAN, 8vo. London, 1828.

Those who regretted that a poem possessing so many poetical beauties as Don Juan, was, from certain passages, unfit for female perusal, will be delighted to learn that an edition has now been published, from which is excluded every thing that could offend the chastest ear.

THE CHELTENHAM ALBUM, and Quarterly Magazine of General Literature. Cheltenham, 1828.

Whether any of our fair readers visit Cheltenham this season or not, we can recommend to them the little periodical, the first number of which is now before us. Its contents are varied and entertaining; the articles chastely and elegantly written, and the poetry by no means inferior to the general run of that commodity in the different magazines. The production of a work of so much unquestionable talent does great credit to the literati of Cheltenham, and we will not for a moment suppose, that, in the language of the newspapers, a discerning public will deny it adequate patronage. "The Knight of the Wounded Hart" is a well told tale of "other days," and is evidently written by one deeply versed in the neglected lore of our ancient minstrelsy. The author is very happy in his application of obsolete terms; his dialogue is appropriate, and the prominent characters in the story well sustained. There are several other pieces of equal merit; and some very smart criticism. Of the poetry we shall give a specimen:—

SONG.—BEAUTY'S EYES.

"Ah! what so cold and cheerless
To hearts that truly love,
As when bright eyes and peerless
Have learnt, alas, to rove!
The brightest of their glances,
Grown spiritless and pale,
No more the soul entrances,
With fond affection's tale.

"When Beauty's eyes have taken
To act a smiling part,
What golden hopes they waken
In love's confiding heart!
But, oh! whene'er they've chosen
To look with cold disdain,
The warmest heart is frozen,
And never melts again!"

HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF THE ANCIENT NATIVE IRISH AND THEIR DESCENDANTS. By Christopher Anderson, 1828.

A very profound and well written volume. Mr. Anderson proves that the Irish were once an enlightened and learned people; and is of opinion that the only way to ameliorate the condition of that unhappy country is to instruct the peasantry through the medium of their own language. We think so too.

Intelligence relative to Literature and the Arts.

In the press, and will shortly be published, in 1 vol. post, 8vo. Literary Remains of the late Henry Neele, Esq. consisting of Lectures on English Poetry, Tales, and Miscellaneous Pieces in prose and verse, never before published.

An Historical Romance, chiefly illustrative of the public events and domestic manners of the Fifteenth Century, entitled, the Last of the Plantagenets, is in the press and will shortly be published.

We understand that the Amulet for the year 1829, will be published early in November, with attractions, both literary and pictorial, greatly exceeding either of its predecessors, and will contain articles from a number of the most distinguished writers of the age, among whom are many who have not heretofore contributed either to this work or to those of a similar character.

The Juvenile Forget Me Not, for the year 1829, is in a state of considerable forwardness. It will contain a number of engravings on steel, and several exquisite Wood Cuts. Its principal feature of attraction in this department will be an engraving by Thompson, from Behnes' Bust of Her Royal Highness the Princess Victoria.—The literary portion of the volume is formed of the contributions of Mrs. Hannah Moore, Mrs. Opie, Mrs. Hemans, James Montgomery, Rev. Dr. Walsh, Miss Mitford, Mrs. Hofland, Allan Cunningham, &c.

Preparing for Publication in post 8vo., and will appear early in October. The Musical Souvenir for 1829.

A new novel from the pen of Sir Walter Scott is in a state of great forwardness; it is founded on an incident in the Life of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. Sir Walter has also three new volumes of Tales of a Grandfather in the press.

BRITISH MUSEUM
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Summer, Ball & Afternoon Home Dresses, for Sept.r 1828.

Invented by Miss Pierpoint. Edited & Portman Sq.re

Publ.d Sept.r 1. 1828 by James Robins & Co. London, & Dublin.

THE MIRROR OF FASHION,

FOR SEPTEMBER, 1828.

SUMMER BALL-DRESS.

A DRESS of white clear muslin, with a broad hem at the border, finished by points edged by a full rûche of tulle. Short full sleeves, with broad lace falling over each shoulder. The corsage *à la Sevigné*; the drapery across the bust confined by a large brooch, formed of a turquoise stone, set round with rubies. The hair arranged in very full curls: the Apollo knot much elevated on the summit of the head, with roses entwined among the bows. Earrings of pearl, and bracelets of turquoise stones, and small rubies. The waist of this dress is encircled by a zone, pointed in front, of turquoise-blue silk.

AFTERNOON HOME-DRESS.

A DRESS of lavender-coloured gros-de-Naples, with four flounce ornaments, laid in puffings round the border, bound with narrow rouleaux. The corsage quite plain, and tight to the shape; sleeves *à l'Amadis*, with broad points at the wrists. Canezou-pelerine, of fine India muslin, trimmed with lace of a Vandyck pattern, and fastened at the throat, with a chrysolite brooch, set round with pearls. Hat of lavender gros-de-Naples, with a rûche at the edge of the brim, and the crown ornamented with blue and pink striped riband. Yellow kid gloves, and parasol of sea-green.

GENERAL MONTHLY STATEMENT OF FASHION.

At this season of the year, when the amusements, and splendid costumes become fatiguing to the form, and uninteresting to the sight, we feel assured that our fair subscribers will be better pleased in perusing a faithful description of those light and graceful fashions now adopted by our most elegant females belonging to the first circles of rank and fashion, as we find them attired at their country seats, and in the different scenes of gay animation, at the various music meetings and other fêtes in the usual places of fashionable autumnal resort.

. White dresses are at present almost universal; they were, indeed, so even during the late rains. The borders have seldom

any other ornament than a very broad hem; though sometimes a very deep flounce is preferred. This, when the dress is muslin, is richly embroidered at the edge, and from the head of the flounce, bias stripes, in a very beautiful, though somewhat large pattern, in vine or ivy leaves, are worked on the dress. When white muslin is worn as an evening dress, it is of the finest Indian manufacture, and is superbly embroidered in feather-stitch. These dresses are very expensive, and are, in consequence, entirely confined to the higher and more wealthy orders. Broad sashes are usually worn with white gowns, and are of the most gay and varied colours. Coloured muslin dresses are much worn in *demi-parure*, and home costume; they are sometimes printed in beautiful patterns of hair stripes, appearing as if finely pencilled in Indian ink: others have the flounces trimmed with narrow braiding, of a conspicuously different shade to the muslin. Silk dresses now are either of levantine or gros-de-Naples; and gossamer summer satin is much in favour for the evening dress of married ladies and matrons: these are trimmed with folds of white satin, which, when on a lavender or lilac dress, have a very beautiful effect. Coloured crapes over slips of white gros-de Naples, form the favourite dresses for music meetings; and balls, when given on particular occasions: otherwise, the summer ball dresses are in a very simple style.

White muslin Canezou-spencers, with the addition of a *barège* scarf, or a pelerine, trimmed with lace, are still favourite out-door coverings; yet silk pelisses, and even mantles have already made their appearance, and, as the season advances, will, no doubt, be more prevalent. The pelisses are of unobtruding colours, such, as myrtle green, and date-leaf-colour: they are very elegantly ornamented on each side of the bust with narrow embossed rouleaux, in fancy trimming. They fasten down the front of the skirt with bows of riband, the colour of the pelisse. Silks of more lively hues are sometimes made partially low, and a handsome double colerette of lace falls from the throat nearly to the bust, but these pelisses are chiefly confined to the carriage, for friendly visits, or receiving friends at home. The mantles are of sarcenet or levantine, of cinnamon brown, or Navarin-smoke, lined with rose-colour.

Bonnets of gros-de-Naples are reckoned the most fashionable for the carriage and the promenade; they are improved in shape, especially from having the size rather diminished; and they tie

down under the chin, very becomingly, in a bow on the right side. White bonnets are often trimmed with ribands beautifully painted. Some carriage hats are of white crape or stiffened net, and are ornamented with oats, which vibrate over the crown. Bonnets of straw, leghorn, and coloured silk, are often trimmed with bows of a broad, rich riband, the colour of the bonnet, which is generally light, variegated by one broad stripe of some very dark colour.

Dress hats for the evening, are generally more adorned with feathers than flowers; when with the former, they are either marabouts or very short ostrich plumage, looking merely like the tips of feathers; these, however, have a very pretty effect, when tastefully disposed about the crown. *Berets* are much in favour for middle-aged ladies at the evening or musical party; they are often ornamented with gold and silver sprigs, when for full dress. The hair of young persons is very beautifully arranged; partaking both of the Greek style, and that observed in the pictures painted by Vandyck: it is very seldom ornamented; except, at times, is to be seen a comb, the gallery of which is wrought in gold, or set with three rows of pearls; many very young ladies, also, at a rural ball, will have a few small flowers very elegantly disposed among their tresses, chiefly on the right side of the head; but the hair charmingly dressed, wants no addition to its native beauty; and it is at this season most admired when totally unornamented.

The most admired colours are date-leaf, cinnamon-brown, myrtle-green, celestial-blue, lavender, pink, and fawn-colour.

MODES DE PARIS.

Among the newest dresses is one of Organdy; which has the flounces and the bias folds divided by three wreaths of flowers, worked in coloured worsted; round the tucker part of the corsage is a smaller and lighter wreath. There are also several dresses of tulle, which are worn over coloured slips; and coloured Organdy dresses have deep flounces cut in bias, which are embroidered at the edges. The dresses for home costume are made *en blouse*, and are often of coloured muslin, embroidered with white cotton. Another favourite gown for this purpose is of printed muslin, or of English white muslin in checquers. Small braidings of Etruscan brown, are formed at the borders of gingham and jaconot dresses, and are carried as high as the knee. Though light and bright colours, such as red and blue, were worn lately at the balls at Ranelagh, yet the greater part of the dancers

were dressed in blue. The white dresses at balls are made in tunics, with the petticoat longer than the tunic, and bordered by two narrow flounces. Chintz dresses, with a white ground, figured with detached bouquets of blue-bells, and a very elegant dress has lately appeared on a lady of distinction of slate-coloured Indian taffety, richly embroidered with grey silk, in two different shades. Three flounces form the customary border on cachemire-gauze dresses; the sleeves of white tulle *à la Marie*. At full dress parties, white blond over pink satin is much admired, with short sleeves, and two blond flounces; the corsage *à la Sevigné*, cut square across the bust: with this dress is worn a white sash. English muslins, worked in stripes formed of wreaths of flowers, are much in request. The breadth of the cuffs at the waists of long sleeves is so immense, that the dress-makers are obliged to keep them in shape with whalebone placed between the lining and the outside. A dress of gros-de-Naples appeared lately where the cuff was laced exactly like a little corset. Striped muslin dresses are very fashionable; the ground is clear, and the stripe as thick as cambric-muslin: on the clear part is Arabic designs; this dress has generally one deep flounce with the stripes across, and is headed with ornaments representing cockle-shells.

The head-dresses consist chiefly of the hair fashionably arranged, with sometimes the addition of an ornamental comb, or cordons of small artificial flowers wound round the head. The hair is arranged in bows and bands, *à la Madonna;* under a hat or bonnet, it is generally disposed in full clusters of curls on each side of the face. Diamond pins, in full dress, are worn to complete the head-dress, when it is *à la Grecque*. The dress hats are of white crape, lined and ornamented with rose-colour; on these hats are sometimes placed rose-coloured feathers, of the weeping-willow kind.

Deshabille pelisses are of white jaconot muslin, trimmed with a double flounce, about two inches in breadth, and laid in large, full plaits. Pelerines of muslin are still worn, but they are coloured, and those of the newest fashion are cut in four points. Some round pelerines are of embroidered tulle, and are trimmed with a double row of lace, set on very full. Muslin Canezou spencers over coloured dresses yet form a favourite out-door covering.

The newest form of the leghorn hat is quite round; on the right side is fastened by a rosette of white riband five short white

feathers. Open straw bonnets, to which the French ladies give the name of English* bonnets, are much in favour; they are lined with blue, and ornamented with five blue, curled feathers. Sarcenet bonnets of rose-colour, trimmed with green satin riband, are also much worn. The flowers now placed on hats and bonnets have long stalks, so that the flower is in continual movement. Hats of coloured crape are ornamented on each side of the crown with a bouquet of field-flowers, and a demi-veil of white blond is generally added. A blue bonnet of gros-de-Naples, with a rûche, pinked, at the edge of the brim, has been much noticed for its becoming shape.

Four strings now are seen dependent from a hat; two on each side, except on those of leghorn. The favourite ribands for sashes and also for hats, are painted in imitation of cachemire. Bonnets of a close kind, with a caul like that of the sempstress bonnet, are very prevalent in the morning rural walk; they are of Scotch plaid, formed by the sewing together of differently coloured ribands; these bonnets are often adorned with foliage. White chip hats are ornamented with honeysuckles and half-opening roses; they are formed in a half wreath, and placed obliquely across the crown. Pinks of various kinds and colours are also favourite flowers on hats; these have long stalks. White crape hats for the carriage are ornamented with clove carnations. Hats of Indian taffety are much in fashion; and the newest style of ornamenting them is with garden-daisies. Bonnets of variegated silk are also much in vogue; some bonnets have been seen with only the caul made of this variegated silk; while the front was of white chip.

The gauze veils, which are now thrown over hats and bonnets in morning deshabille, are bordered, in colours; this border is very broad.

The colours most prevalent are sea-green, bird-of-paradise-yellow, rose-colour, blue, lapis-grey, and ponceau.

The Greek curls or *fusée* at the back of the head are now placed vertically; and other innovations were made in this head-dress at the last ball at Ranelagh. Two young ladies among the best dancers had their hair arranged in the way mentioned above; and the style was greatly admired.

* The English ladies have not worn them these two years.

THE APOLLONIAN WREATH.

STANZAS.

[Written under a medallion representing the figures of Cupid and Psyche.]

Young Eros, as bidden, flew down with his dart,
And wounded poor Psyche's fluttering heart;
Through the green gauze veil her bright limbs were beaming,
And of victor love was the maiden dreaming.
He had left his poor victim to wake and to bleed,
But his eye was caught, and he went without heed
'Till he stumbled and fell—shall I say, to his sorrow?—
Fell on the barb of his own cruel arrow!
With Psyche's blood it was newly dyed,
And, mingled with love-gall, it entered his side.
Then, swifter than light, did the subtle flame
Shoot through the amorous boy-god's frame.
His brow became hot, and his lip became dry,
And he spent the whole day in one long-drawn sigh.
So when Erebus came with the evening shade,
His zephyrs, despatched, flew away with the maid.
From the halls of her sire they bore their rich treasure
To Love's downy couch, in the Island of Pleasure,
Where the rose and the bee have nor thorn nor sting,
And where Joy fans the air with his gossamer wing.

Night's ebon curtain no sight did discover,
And Psyche saw nought of her heavenly lover,
But she heard his soft voice, felt his delicate kiss,
And gave up her soul to ambrosial bliss.

For what maid would not yield up her gentle dominion
For the prize of a plume from that perfumed pinion?—
What god would not barter his hopes on high
For a diamond drop from that radiant eye?——
If the plume were Love's own purple plume;
Did the drop from Psyche's eyelid come.

R.

CUPID'S SONG.

Fair Psyche ope thy laughing eyes,
Shake the dew-pearls from thy tresses,
For thee to greet,
With odours sweet,
See all the waking flow'rets rise,
In all their gayest morning dresses.

Come, quickly leave thy rosy bed,
Trip with me to merry numbers,
For, dearest, hark,
The soaring lark
Is trilling sweetly o'er thine head,
To arouse thee from thy slumbers.

'Tis pity, when the morning breaks,
And gaily in the sunny beams,
The honey bee
Hums merrily,
When ev'ry blushing rose-bud wakes,
To waste the time in idle dreams.

Obadiah.

SONG.

Air—Gramachree.

The rose he gave is wither'd now,
The song he lov'd is mute;
He left me but a perjur'd vow,
A broken heart and lute.
I flung away the lute he gave,—
I sang of slighted truth—
My last low dirge above the grave
Of love, and hope, and youth.

I tore the rose with heartless mirth,
Like his, who mock'd my pain,
I dash'd the lute against the earth—
It never spoke again.
The night winds o'er one tuneless string
Make their unearthly moan,
As if the buried dead could sing
Of hearts that break alone.

THE OAK.

FROM THE GERMAN OF KÖRNER.

THE evening comes; the sounds of day are gone,
The sun's last glow gleams red on tower and tree,
Here 'neath your shade I take my seat alone,
And oh, my heart, my heart! how full art thou and free!

With ancient time dwelt ancient spotless faith,
But life's green freshness crowns thy summit now,
And antique forms of power are in thy wreath,
And look down on us from thy leafy brow.

How much of earth's rare beauties and best braves
Doth death exult o'er, with his funeral bell!
E'en through the glimmering region of your leaves
Yon sunset struggling smiles his last farewell.

But *thou* with destiny hast nought to do,
Time on *your* head has vainly spent his breath,
To me he calls from out yon whispering bough,
All worldly grandeur must succumb to death.

Thou hast endured through summer's fiery heat,
Through wintry storms hast flourished brave and free,
Beneath your shade the traveller takes his seat,
And grateful pours libations forth to thee.

And when your leaves drop with the dying year,
Whirled from each branch before the west-wind's wing,
Those buried children heaped red and sear,
Yield you fresh nurture in the pomp of spring.

Image sublime of ancient Teuton faith,
Such as displayed in former better years,
When for his father-land, despising death,
The soldier-citizen took up his spears.

Oh! what avails that I repeat the woe;
The woe in which all recreants now take part—
Germania, thou proudest, that thou'rt low;—
Thy OAK still stands; but fallen, fallen thou art!

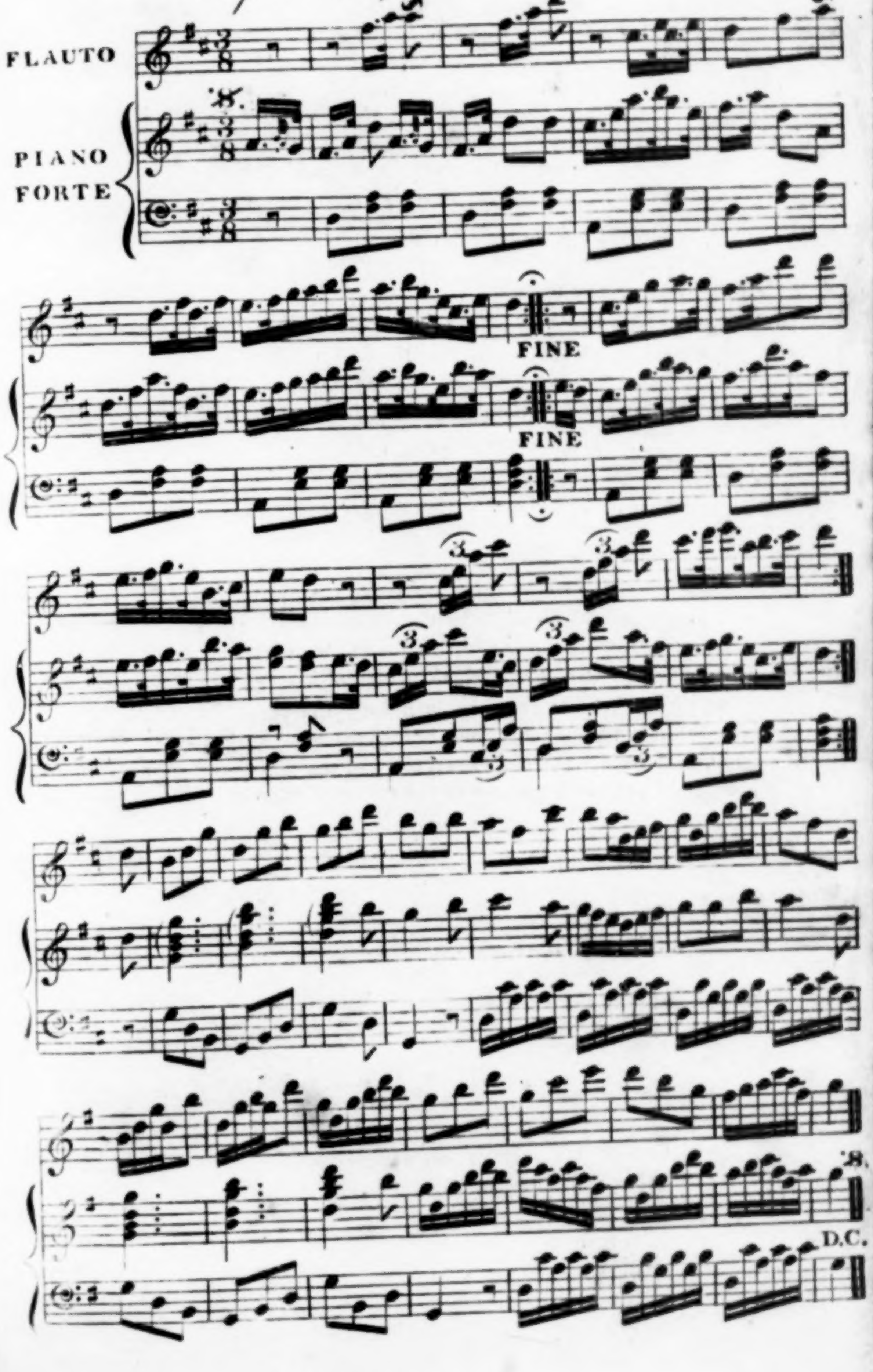
June, 1828. R.

TO OUR READERS.

The answer to the music which accompanies our present Number is—'A BLUSH.'

DUCHESS of KENT'S WALTZ.

Composed by Mr. R. Beale.



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